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THE NEW
STATESMAN
AND NATION

The Week-end Review

Vol. XXI. No. 538 [Incorporating THE ATHENÆUM] SATURDAY, JUNE 14, 1941 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] SIXPENCE

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THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE

The loss of Crete is the focus of many anxieties. Once again the Prime Minister attempted to allay those anxieties by a speech which was masterly in form, reasonable in tone, candid in admitting difficulties, and reassuring in effect. His main, and fully justified, concern was to remind the House of Commons and the country that the campaign in Crete, and, indeed, the entire battle in the Eastern Mediterranean, cannot be judged except as part of the whole vast theatre of the war. He emphasised the shortage of anti-aircraft guns and other material, denied the existence of any damaging form of dual control, and reminded us that the evacuation, costly as it was, is to be seen in its correct perspective as only one phase of a great delaying action which began in Belgium over a year ago and embraces all the operations, successful and otherwise, so far conducted in the Middle East. If this argument failed to satisfy the House, it was because many are troubled by the feeling that the shortcomings displayed in Crete are symptomatic of wider deficiencies in preparation and direction, and because the Prime Minister said nothing to convince the nation that the time we are supposed to be gaining by this costly delaying action is being utilised in this country to the best advantage.

Taking Mr. Churchill's hint and looking at the Mediterranean in the perspective of the whole war, we argue elsewhere in this issue that the greatest danger lies in this country. Mr. Churchill assured M.P.s on active service who raised serious questions about our home defence that the military lessons of Crete were fully appreciated by those responsible for our defence against invasion. We hope he is right and that our home defence is not still dogged by a blimpish mentality. But we are considering rather the question of production and national will than that of defence against invasion.

Mr. Churchill cannot attend to everything, and it is the defect of his towering position in the Cabinet that no dominating figure emerges to lead on the Home Front. If Britain is to avoid defeat, whether by invasion or, possibly, by gradual exhaustion, much more must be done to strengthen the position in Britain. The economics of siege must be more firmly grasped and applied in a dozen different directions—in stimulating output, regulating consumption, eliminating waste and co-ordinating the present makeshift muddle of overlapping and competitive controls. And not merely in order that the fighting Services may be supplied with ampler sinews of war or even that the civilian population may be spared unnecessary and unequally distributed hardships. The over-riding reason why superlatively good organisation means life or death for us is that ultimately a democracy will preserve its will to endure and to repulse the enemy only if it is fully satisfied that its Government is doing all that is humanly possible to strengthen the defences, to mitigate the inevitable sufferings of a siege, and to ensure that, in the nation's struggle to survive, no individuals are permitted to avoid their due share of the burden or reap profits from scarcity or the losses of others.

It would be ridiculous to pretend that these conditions, essential if public morale is not to deteriorate in the coming winter, exist to-day. "We can take it" is a phrase much in the mouths of propagandists. The people can indeed stand up to danger without complaint to a degree that no one would have dared to prophesy. They can be patient under a succession of military reverses; they can stand fatigue, suffering and shortage. They are as determined as ever to carry on. But the quality of this capacity to take it and the strength of this determination depends upon confidence in their leaders. They believe in Mr. Churchill, but they are much more troubled by what may seem to him comparatively small matters connected with rationing, queues, cigarettes, stories of profiteering and the slow machinery of relief after a *blitz* than they are by questions of high strategy and imperial defence.

The Prime Minister is engrossed in the complex strategy of operations from Iceland to Irak. The one criticism which he does not meet is that he refuses to delegate to any colleague in his administration plenary power to deal with the hundred and one large and small problems of detailed organisation to which we refer. "No Government," exclaimed Mr. Churchill, "can conduct war unless it stands on a solid foundation and is known to do so." Precisely.

But the Prime Minister need have no fear that he personally does not command the country's support. What occasions growing and dangerous disquiet is the knowledge that vital decisions are deferred and pressing problems neglected because the Prime Minister insists on trying to hold all the reins in his own hands.

No hint of intention to reconstruct the Government was given by Mr. Churchill in the debate; yet nothing less will suffice to reassure the country as to the future conduct of the war *at home*. In constructing his Cabinet the Prime Minister has been at pains to preserve some sort of balance of party representation—at least as reflected in the composition of the present Parliament. The public, in its present mood, is profoundly disinterested in political parties. Its demand is for more efficient and juster organisation of the war effort. If it be the case that among his colleagues the Prime Minister can find none fit to undertake the role of acting as his Deputy with full powers in relation to all Home problems, can the Government be said to possess a " solid foundation " ? Cabinet Ministers are replaceable; and, if the necessary reinforcements for his Ministry cannot be found in Britain, Mr. Churchill has among Commonwealth statesmen a wide choice.

Freedom and Food in Syria

Will the months eaten by the locusts in Crete be made good by the protective occupation of Syria? Regarded as a politico-military move, our advance has been accompanied by welcome signs of better appreciation by the Foreign Office of the correct political technique for this form of strategy: the Syrians, as a reward for co-operation, are offered freedom and food—a guaranteed status of independence and membership economically of the dollar-sterling group. To a semi-blockaded country the material offer (so long as our Navy commands the Suez Canal) may well prove attractive, and so may the promise of immediate termination of the French Mandate, whose *de facto* prolongation would be almost as hateful in Syrian eyes as Axis tutelage. The odds are that a very substantial proportion of the native population can be counted as sympathisers with the advancing Imperial troops.

From the purely military angle, however, the operation is obviously full of risks. Though it would be pleasant to record the advance into Syria as an instance of British initiative, it is wiser to realise that we are still dancing militarily to Hitler's tune; the occupation of Syria was forced on General Wavell in June, 1941, in order to forestall (or, at worst, reciprocate) a German invasion which had already gone some way in preliminary infiltration by aeroplanes and specialists An operation which could have been effected with little opposition in December, 1940, may now involve a major campaign. We are acting to-day with wisdom and vigour, but at least six months late.

From the Vichy forces in Syria opposition seems likely to be perfunctory and feeble: the morale of the Levantine Army is low and its resources in aircraft and tanks too limited for sustained resistance, even if the will to resist a British advance were solid. Damascus and Beirut lie within our grasp, and there seems little reason to question our ability to reach Homs and the Mosul-Tripoli pipe-line. But we can hardly expect not to have to cope with a very violent Axis counter to these developments. German strategy to-day is much more flexible than in 1914. Possibly the German Command, taking advantage of the diversion to Syria of a considerable British striking force, may order General Rommel, who has now been substantially reinforced from Germany, to go all out for the Suez Canal from Libya. The heavy air attacks on Alexandria support the view that, neglecting temporarily the northern pincer, the Germans may intend to take the shortest road to Cairo.

Alternatively, having compelled General Wavell to send a force into Syria at the eleventh hour, the Germans may still pursue the plan of pincer-attack on Egypt. Admittedly it is much farther from Crete to Cyprus than from the Greek mainland to Crete; but Cyprus (if we may judge by despatches from the local correspondent of the *Times*) is a sketchily defended island. Making due allowance for the relative proximity of British fighter-bases in Palestine, we can hardly reckon Cyprus as impossible of capture by air-borne troops; and its terrain is such as to permit swift construction by Germany of flying fields for use against Syria. Even without the acquisition of Cyprus (though that seems to be almost a prerequisite), it may be possible for German air-borne and sea-borne forces based on the Italian Dodecanese to hug the Turkish coast and to land in the north of Syria at Alexandretta and Latakia. It must take time before the British army can reach Aleppo, and in that interval—a week, a fortnight?—the Reich Command, if their planned attack is sufficiently prepared, may make Northern Syria a trap for General Maitland-Wilson's force.

Time, in fact, is the essence of the operation. If the British advance is not delayed appreciably by the resistance of Vichy French troops, and if it is possible to consolidate our position in Syria before the Germans succeed in establishing themselves in either Cyprus or Aleppo, then we shall have won an important trick in the second game of a desperate rubber. Despite serious loss round Crete, our naval strength in the Eastern Mediterranean—so long as Alexandria is tenable—should be sufficient at least to check enemy sea-borne transport to Syria. If anxiety about the Near East is not allayed, it is because, on land, General Wavell has once more been compelled to disperse resources which in total—until more American supplies arrive *via* the Red Sea—are admittedly circumscribed by shortage of material.

The Home Front (*by an Industrial Correspondent*)

I wonder what story lies behind Sir William Beveridge's retirement from the Ministry of Labour and the appointment of Mr. Ince to the new office of Director of Man-Power? I feel sure there is a story. Unless I am mistaken, Sir William's withdrawal leaves the Ministry in the exclusive possession of the " old gang " of permanent Civil Servants. When Ernest Bevin assumed office as Minister of Labour, he made two interesting experiments—the appointment of a Labour Supply Board, including two leading Trade Unionists and two employers, and the institution of a Man-Power Survey under the direction of Sir William Beveridge, helped by Mr. G. D. H. Cole. Mr. Cole presently faded out, and, after an interval, set to work as Chairman of the Nuffield College Social Reconstruction Survey, which is working chiefly for Mr. Greenwood and Lord Reith; and it is now announced that Sir William Beveridge also will be working for Mr. Greenwood when he has finished off a special job dealing with the use made of highly skilled persons who have been taken into the armed forces. Meanwhile, Mr. Bevin's Labour Supply Board has also dissolved. Mr. Coppard, the builders' leader, resigned long ago; and one by one the remaining members drifted off into other jobs. So now the Ministry of Labour, in respect of personnel, is back to pre-war, though its functions have undergone a tremendous change. Wonder is increased when it is remembered that Mr. Bevin presumably depends on this group of permanents for his work as Chairman of the Production Executive as well as in his Labour capacity. It makes one scratch one's head, doesn't it?

* * *

When is Lord Reith going to face up to the problem of land ownership in our blitzed cities? Even the property-owners' associations are crying out for measures to prevent land speculation; and respectable Conservative town clerks are saying privately that there is no real solution short of public ownership. Indeed, everyone admits that something will have to be done to prevent rebuilding on the old sites without change of surface ownership. The main difference is between those who want some form of public ownership, local or national, and those who advocate one sort or another of property-owners' pool, with powers to redistribute sites for re-development rather on the lines of the Enclosure Acts of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The advocates of " pools " are further divided into two schools of thought. One school, the more advanced, wants to make in each city a pool large enough to include all property likely to be affected by comprehensive schemes of post-war development; whereas the other school favours only small pools, covering the areas actually destroyed by enemy action. On this latter basis there would be a number of separate pools in each blitzed city; and it is plain that each group of property-owners would fight like tigers to get the plan of re-development on to lines which would raise to a maximum the value of their own land. Even the larger pool scheme is open to the same objection, though to a smaller extent. There is, in fact, no way of securing satisfactory development except that of public ownership of the entire land of the city, and of a sufficient surrounding area to allow of the opening up of central sites and of rehousing in satellite towns on a basis which will not subject the community to exorbitant land charges. I repeat, What is Lord Reith doing about all this? Waiting for the Uthwatt Committee? But I believe that body produced a first report some time ago. The problem needs tackling now, before the vested interests have been given time to entrench themselves for the future.

* * *

The miners have got the conditions of their bonus modified and have promised to do everything in their power to increase coal output. But they cannot work impossibilities; and the return to the pits, at least temporarily, of a large number of skilled miners now in the armed forces ought to receive careful consideration. Indeed, the whole question of the size of the Army needs re-thinking in the light of the serious lag in production. There is no sense in having more soldiers than we can arm; and the standards of adequate armament need to be a good deal higher than they have been hitherto. Munitions and other essential supplies are still the primary problem.

The Debate on Crete (*by a Parliamentary Correspondent*)

The debate opened in an unusual way. As the Government had been attacked in the press and in speeches in the country, the Prime Minister explained, he would let the critics open the debate and would wind up himself. It quickly emerged that the embryo opposition had not asked for the debate. What seems to have happened was that the Whips of the three parties, who in these days are all Government Whips, had arranged the debate between them, Lees-Smith opening for the Labour Party and Percy Harris speaking for the Liberals. In fact, therefore, the debate was arranged by the Government to bring the intense situation over Crete to a head.

Lees-Smith spoke unusually well and then Hore-Belisha raised the temperature of the House with a highly critical analysis. Its effect was somewhat spoiled because he stuck too closely to his manuscript. Beverley Baxter, too, was very critical in a speech that was enlivened by a humorous passage of arms with Aneurin Bevan, whom he accused of having a grooved mind. Both Col. MacNamara and Beverley Baxter were concerned about the fatal influence upon our war effort of minds warped by the old school tie or by experience as Trade Union officials. Col. MacNamara, who spoke with a soldier's knowledge of the home defences, gravely warned the country that they were inadequate. In fact, the House, after its holiday, was getting to grips with realities. Winterton hit hard at the Prime Minister for indulging in ridicule and rhetoric instead of answering criticisms. His phrase "tropical jungles of fluorescent rhetoric" delighted everyone. Wardlaw Milne, like Winterton, was concerned at our partial effort on the production side. References to absenteeism involved both in trouble with the Labour benches, but peace was restored when they made it clear they would both deal ruthlessly with inefficient managements. The failure of the Government to deal effectively with production is inducing an unhappy tendency towards national disunity on a class basis. Both Labour and Capital are anxious to win the war. Both are worried by the obvious inefficiencies which face them in their daily work. Godfrey Nicholson, made a gallant attempt to deal with the problem of when the soldier should refuse to carry out an impossible task set him by his political masters. The Prime Minister, replying to these criticisms, admitted that they were legitimate, but he confined himself to the broadest issues. His speech was long and brilliant. He set out the considerations which must affect the decisions of the Minister of Defence in deciding what equipment he can spare for any particular theatre of operations. His references to the attitude of the press and to Hore-Belisha's Edinburgh speech showed an increasing intolerance of criticism. His attack on Hore-Belisha went too far and swung the sympathy of Members around to his victim. Oratory did not this time carry the House off its feet. Applause at his sallies was subdued and laughter never rose above a titter. All faces on the crowded benches on both sides of the House were serious and intent. Even the Treasury Bench was subdued, a unique occurrence when the Prime Minister is hitting hard. The House, as a whole, is realising the danger that we may be defeated if our resources are not utilised to the full and with the utmost intelligence and judgment.

The Prime Minister is universally regarded as indispensable. If he were not the days of this Government would be numbered. What every back bencher is wondering is how can the Prime Minister be persuaded to form a small War Cabinet of men who have the capacity and the will-power to stand up to him, who will insist on thorough discussion of policy and organisation, and who will ruthlessly cut out the deadwood that now impedes the war effort. If the Prime Minister of his own volition reorganises his Government on these lines, his hold on the House and the country will be unassailable. The organisation of an opposition has unquestionably received an impetus as a result of recent events. One thing is certain. The Government will receive a further battering in the shipping debate, for which Shinwell has staked out a claim and which is to be in public.

On Wednesday Kenneth Lindsay made the important proposal that a special Minister should be put in charge of Civil Defence. He argued that we must have a common authority for health and security in all matters arising out of the blitz. It is, for instance, absurd that the outside of a shelter should be "security" and the inside "health." He urged that local initiative could be maintained, but that we needed national, regional and local officers who could act on all sides of Civil Defence without the present departmental overlapping. The Government rejected the proposal.

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THE SIEGE OF BRITAIN

THE House of Commons and the country now realise that the issue this summer is still whether Britain can stand a siege and repel an invasion. The Mediterranean may be held or lost, but the essential is this country's capacity to hold on. That depends on the interrelated questions of morale, organisation and production. We may note one favourable factor. In the air above this island Britain is likely to prove defensible, just as she was last autumn. So many statements have been made about "the reply to the night bomber" that the public is wisely sceptical. This journal is not likely to be accused of easy optimism, but we believe that in a few months' time night bombing of this country will be very expensive to the enemy; and it may even be deterrent. Shipping losses, as Mr. Churchill pointed out, have somewhat declined in May, but they remain the gravest military factor in the situation. If Mr. Roosevelt makes good his promise to see that help sent from America actually reaches this country, that should turn the scale in the battle of the Atlantic. But we must not rely too far on the United States. It is well to remember, as an official American expert reminded the United States the other day, than even with American help Britain's resources are declining and not gaining in comparison with those of Germany. "Since last summer the United States has provided Britain with far less than Hitler has been able to extract from France alone, not to mention Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Luxembourg and Holland." Since that remark the resources of the Balkans have fallen into Hitler's hands. We are still fighting a defensive battle. Remembering these grave facts, we have to face a decrease of imports with all that this implies in its impact on production here and on the spirit of the British people. The key to the defence of Britain lies in shipping and if we are to make the best use of our shipping we shall need to plan our diminished resources with far more care, cut out what is unnecessary, and so to ration what we have that no one can complain of unfair treatment. If this country is efficiently organised, if we all eat our share of a balanced diet, and no one gets more than his share, if we are knit into a communal whole, we can stand a prolonged siege. If the country is divided and angry about the racketeer and the hoarder if it does not feel that its leaders are up to their job, if it remains a country of rich and poor, Hitler may never need to invade at all.

Shipping, as Mr. Churchill and Mr. Menzies have both again reminded us, is the key to the siege of Britain. On shipping all else depends; what we consume, what we ration, what we produce—all these to-day depend on what we decide to import on a diminished tonnage. The question is one of priorities, and the priorities must be decided by an estimate of the whole position, and not by haggling between firms and Government departments. The whole of national consumption must be related to the effort to save shipping space. It is a mistake in psychology to boggle at asking the people to make sacrifices: it is equally a mistake to think that it is unimportant for some to make them while others do not need to do so. The roads on Sunday run with the private cars of owners using their pleasure-ration of petrol. They would cheerfully put the cars up if they realised that tankers could be used to import vegetable oils.

How best use our shipping space for raw materials of war and food? The food problem is still only half-solved, because of the division of the Ministries of Food and Agriculture, which should have been combined long before war broke out. The Ministry of Agriculture is dominated by the National Union of Farmers, which still, very naturally, thinks in terms of fat cattle. We still have no scientific policy of nutrition and no very clear decisions about the merits of various types of imported feeding stuffs. The nation is not yet being fed on a diet which combines to the best advantage economy of shipping space and nutritive value. Bread consumption, the Ministry of Food reports, is up 20 per cent. in the last few months. Even if it remains unrationed, some 600,000 tons of shipping-space per annum could be saved by making whole-meal bread compulsory, which would incidentally be better for every one, though it might annoy a vested interest. A million more tons could be saved by using an admixture of potatoes. Increased consumption of vegetables, to balance the decrease of meat, can only be ensured by control of vegetable prices. The nutrition experts can help the Ministry of Food to determine whether a balanced diet can best be obtained by importing more or less sugar, meat, cheese, or wheat; also which are the best crops to cultivate here. It is they and not the Farmers' Union who should determine agricultural policy.

Imagination is the faculty most lacking in our ruling class. They hesitate to cut off luxury consumption because they do not realise that few of the people have ever known it; and are quite prepared for the well-to-do to manage without it. A Minister talks of the working-man enjoying his daily half-pint in the country pub; but in many parts of the country a pint a week is what the average farm labourer affords, and there have recently been places where beer itself has run short. Though we are all conservative about our diet, women would settle down to making do on any reasonable rations which were justly distributed and easily obtained. But they resent the fact that the rich can buy not only varieties like salmon, which could not be made to go round, but all the available fish supply, raised to fantastic prices. On the other hand, there are some luxuries which are near to essentials. When the people are told that cigarettes are not really short, and yet fail to find any in the shops, more harm is done to morale than by the loss of a battle in the Near East. If they believe that cigarettes are being hoarded, they will feel little enthusiasm for an administration which allows it. If the government cannot imagine the damage to morale brought by a sense of injustice over food profiteering and cigarette hoarding, it should either read the reports of its intelligence service or create a new one. The departmental heads of the Ministry of Information could give ample evidence—if they were told to produce the material in the hands of their juniors.

ECONOMIC REALITIES

DURING recent weeks, most people in this country have become increasingly conscious of the "economic squeeze." Except in central London, where many things that have almost disappeared elsewhere are still obtainable, the shopper, man or woman, has returned home with empty hands after many a quest. The rationing of clothing has brought home to almost everybody the truth that, until the "blockade of Britain" is broken, we have to expect a growing scarcity of everything we can contrive to do without, and even of things which we still find it difficult not to regard as indispensable. The "concentration of industry" is already beginning to squeeze out firms at a considerable rate; and there is much more to come, as compulsory schemes are applied to industries which have not voluntarily set their house in order.

The main purpose of "concentration," we are told, is to release more workers for service in the essential war industries. But it is very doubtful if this is really its main object. It is in part forced upon us by sheer shortage of raw materials; for the available tonnage must be concentrated more and more upon munitions and foodstuffs, and even these are rival claimants on a dwindling amount of shipping space. The tonnage at our disposal is reduced, we must remember, not only by the sinkings, of which figures are regularly published, but also by the vessels damaged, but not sunk, for as long as it takes to bring them back into serviceable repair. Moreover, of late the Germans have increasingly concentrated their air attacks upon our docks and dockyards. By damaging docks they hinder unloading and cause delay and confusion in transport and distribution.

Whatever the motive behind "concentration" may be, its *effect* should clearly be to release additional supplies of man-power, both skilled and unskilled, for the war industries. But are these industries adequately equipped to absorb this man-power as it is released? Or even if they appear to be, is the additional man-power showing its effect in a corresponding impetus to production? All the evidence in our possession goes to show that output in the war industries is at present lagging seriously behind what was expected of them under the plans drawn up last winter. Allegations of men standing idle on the job for lack of necessary materials are too numerous to be lightly disregarded: they are, indeed, the common talk in the factory centres. It is also freely stated that the construction of new factories and extensions is a long way behind schedule, and that the rate of building output shows a serious falling-off. In addition, there has been a renewal of the old charges that firms, instead of pooling their resources in the emergency, are hanging on to men and to materials which they expect to use as and when fresh contracts come in, while work is being held up elsewhere for lack of the same materials and the same kinds of skilled labour.

But, at any rate in some of the key centres, there is another cause of low output which may transcend all these in order of importance. Where air raids have involved really widespread damage to the workers' homes, the population has perforce spread itself out over the surrounding countryside and the smaller towns within possible reach. Families have often moved to greater distances than the breadwinner. The consequence of this has been an increasing reluctance to work early or late, on plea of the time taken in travel, and an increasing irregularity of work owing to the desire to visit evacuated families or to the feeling that a worker needs a rest oftener now that travel conditions have become worse. Women workers are said to be particularly given to this last form of absenteeism.

Now it is clear that the only way of combating these forces making for reduced output is to improve the conditions which give rise to them. One way is to provide better transport facilities in order to avoid the immense waste of time which is incurred through standing in queues. The other way, and in the long run the more important, is to restore tolerable housing conditions as quickly as possible, and therewith so to improve fire-fighting and other emergency services as to make it practicable for most workers still to live within reasonable travelling distance of their work.

It is no longer possible to pretend that the need can be met by mere emergency patching up of damaged dwellings. People who have to exist in a room or two of a blitzed house, often without water or gas or glass, and often under conditions far from weatherproof, cannot be expected to give, day in and day out and month after month, a full response in factory output. Their efficiency is bound to suffer.

This factor combines, with the slowness of new construction essential for war purposes, to throw the spotlight on the building industry—always notorious for weakness of organisation and casualness of habit. Anyone who knows the building and civil engineering industries knows that their habits are peculiar. To some extent this arises out of the casual nature of their employment. Masters and men alike—and the gangers, who are important intermediaries between the men and the larger contractors—are used to alternatives of slackness and activity, and unused to continuous high exertion. It seems doubtful whether the war has changed this, at any rate over the wide field still occupied by the "cost *plus*" system, which offers no stimulus at all to efficiency in either employer or employee. It was hoped, when the Ministry of Works and Buildings was set up, that this meant that something would be done; but Lord Reith, after a notable speech or two at the start, seems to have faded into obscurity, and it is to be doubted whether his Ministry possesses any real power to control the use made of the building industry by the numerous separate departments which are rival claimants upon its services.

All building activities ought to be brought under unified control—a strong control, armed with power to reorganise the industry from top to bottom and to deal with materials and their production and allocation as well as with building on the site. The institution of mobile squads of builders is one step in the right direction; but it is not enough, because it does not touch the conditions of slackness and waste which exist on some of the major constructional projects now being carried out. Building is becoming more and more plainly a key industry—for on it depend aerodromes for our defence, new factories to replace those rendered untenable, and the tolerable housing of the working population for the sustained productive effort which is still ahead of us.

Building, however, is only a part of the problem. With Mr. Bevin at the head of the Production Executive, and Lord Beaverbrook wielding an undefined power as the Prime Minister's deputy in dealing with priorities, the Government is yet very far from having developed any effective system of co-ordinated control in the economic field. Department still wars with department, and even one section of a department with another; and there is no one equipped with the authority and means of regular information which are needed in order to achieve a rational co-ordination of effort. Mr. Bevin clearly has no civil service machine which he can use for this purpose. His staff at the Ministry of Labour is merely one departmental staff among others; and it lacks the qualities needed for assuming the wider function, even if it were given the powers.

The entire economic situation is, indeed, fully as disquieting as the military, and presents an equally strong case for drastic overhauling of the existing Government machine. Its defects are less apparent to the ordinary man, because they cannot be directly seen in military disasters, such as that of Crete—on which they have, nevertheless, an important bearing. Aeroplanes, tanks, anti-aircraft guns, light and mobile artillery of many sorts, projectiles and a host of other war supplies, must clearly be produced much faster than we are now producing them if our inferiority in weapon strength is to be overcome. Prophecies that, at this or that date, we shall overtake and pass the German output are colder and colder comfort as it becomes more doubtful whether we have made nearly enough allowance for the German mobilisation of productive resources in the conquered countries, including France. These things are obvious; yet it is almost true that no major changes have been made in the organisation of our war industries since the days of the Chamberlain Government. There have been patchings and secondary changes, including a tighter control over labour; but the essential methods of organising war production remain unaltered. In the war industries, each firm still maintains its sacred independence; controllers are still drawn from the industries in which they hold a private interest; departments still negotiate separately with firms which produce far more than one of them; priorities still seem to be in much the same confusion as ever. It has not yet been understood how radically the needs of war economy differ from those of peace, or that it is fatal to allow considerations of post-war profit-making utility to interfere with what needs doing now.

This article has been written in the hope that criticism, based on our most recent setbacks, will not be concentrated unduly on the shortcomings of military strategy or of the conduct of the war in its wider political aspects. The roots of our failure are economic also; and our need to reorganise is fully as great in the economic sphere as in any other. Departmental muddling and sectionalism, and a desire to preserve the independent control of separate business firms and combines, are here the enemy; and what is needed is a strong hand over the entire economic effort in all its phases.

THE AMERICAN MOOD

New York City (By Airmail)

ON the American home front the war's repercussions are now being felt on every American Main Street. The nation-wide civilian defence scheme, under the direction of the picturesque Mayor La Guardia, New York City's "Little Flower," is lining up the whole adult population for emergencies. The cost of living, especially in the matter of foodstuffs, is rising—largely owing to huge Government lease-lend purchases of dairy products and other foods for export to Britain. Government figures show that 900 products are selling at wholesale prices 12 per cent. higher than two years ago, while a basic group of 28 raw commodities and agricultural products are up 42 per cent. and still rising. It is officially announced that the City of New York is prepared for any emergency, but just to be on the safe side many property owners are taking out insurance policies against bombing risks at premiums which stand at present at 15 cents per $100.00 for two months' cover.

The decision of the Vichy "Quislings" to co-operate with the Axis means that the war is ceasing to be a "foreign affair" and is dangerously near becoming a war for the security of the Americas. The determination grows that Hitler's policy of "confuse and conquer" must be defeated, and at all cost and all risk to fight, if fight there must be, with Britain rather than after the British bastion has been lost.

"What those of us who disagree with Colonel Lindbergh cannot understand," states Walter Lippman in the *New York Herald-Tribune*, "is why, even if he thinks we can stand alone in the last ditch, we should be advised to abandon the British and so make it certain that we shall stand alone in the last ditch. For surely it cannot be argued that standing alone in the last ditch against a world of enemies is a desirable situation, that it is anything but an appallingly dangerous one which a sane people will, while it still can, do all in its power to avert."

Indications increase, not only that the American public by and large agrees with that viewpoint (a recent test poll revealed 63 per cent. opposed to the Lindbergh view), but that the idea gains ground that half measures never won a war and will not win this one. The conflicting desires to stay out of war and give all aid to Britain, which have split and confused the mind of America for months, are being resolved. The trend is plain. Popular support for President Roosevelt's policy is deepening with each new development which brings the threat of war closer to this country. More and more Americans can put their finger unerringly on Dakar on the map.

President Roosevelt has declared that this nation will not enter a foreign war "unless we are attacked." Interference with United States shipping carrying munitions to General Wavell's army in the Middle East would constitute precisely the sort of "attack" which caused the United States to fight two declared and two undeclared wars in the past. Should the Nazis attempt to move one inch nearer the Western Hemisphere, whether via Iceland, the Caribbean, Azores or Dakar (all embraced in the geographical definition of the Western Hemisphere), it is highly probable that the United States would accept the challenge. If many more Axis "tourists"—whether of German, Spanish or Italian vintage—appear in South America, the American powder keg may ignite.

Some usually well-informed quarters here predict that the supreme crisis for the United States will arrive within 60 days. Others, probably with a better sense of timing, visualise America's present undeclared war on the Axis continuing at an increasing tempo for some months longer before it is formalised. Both schools of thought agree that the decisive hour is at hand, and that if the United States is not shooting within three months, it will be due to the fact—becoming clearer with every passing day—that to keep this country out of the actual firing line is now a major point of Nazi strategy. Hitler swallowed the repeal of the embargo, the release of the destroyers, and the passage of the Lease-Lend Act; he will, it is suspected, swallow U.S. convoys, the new scheme for training R.A.F. pilots at American airfields, or any other expansion of American aid which involves a smaller risk to Nazi prospects than would an American declaration of war.

Washington inclines to the view that, despite the clear "hint" to this country represented by the sinking of the *Zamzam*, United States supply ships en route to Suez may be left alone. The sinking of American ships would almost certainly lead to shooting, but it is by no means certain such a development would result in war. For, while the present mood of this country persists, it is improbable that even the loss of American lives under stated conditions will in itself be regarded by the American public as cause for embarking on full-fledged hostilities—although an attack on an American ship would be regarded as abundant justification for patrolling United States warships to "let go with all they've got!"

In a sentence, the vital issue is no longer a question of shooting, but of national security and "not knuckling under to the gangsters."

For the moment, the United States is enjoying the best of both belligerent and non-belligerent worlds. And the Yanks are frankly hoping that happy state of affairs will, by some miracle, continue until—in their language—"the Axis hollers 'Uncle!'"

But let Hitler show a disposition to unfurl his swastika banners any nearer to the Western Hemisphere, and sentiment will abruptly change. On the subject of fighting a war to "keep Hitler in Europe" Americans are backers of President Monroe to the last Isolationist.

With U.S. aircraft designers talking of hundred-ton aerial leviathans, able to carry sufficient fuel to fly round the world non-stop, Americans are a trifle scared lest the contracting "Maginot Ocean" of President Monroe's doctrine should prove just another Maginot Line—and wistfully wonder whether extending America's defences to the line: Iceland, Great Britain, Azores and Dakar, would not be a smart method of keeping the gaudy Gauleiters out of the Western Hemisphere.

HESSELL TILTMAN

A LONDON DIARY

RUMOUR has flown with Sir Stafford Cripps from Moscow to Stockholm, and rumour will no doubt greet his arrival here. It may sound simple, but the reason for Sir Stafford's visit is that responsible people here want to talk with him. The bulk of a Nazi Europe spreads between Britain and Moscow, and if there is still a chance of improving the relation between the two countries—and I believe there may be—the opportunity must not be wasted. There are signs of improvement. Though Britain still refuses to recognise the Soviet occupation of the Baltic States, the long-standing trouble about the Baltic seamen has at last been settled, and other reasons for dispute may also be decided if Stalin is sufficiently worried about Germany. Hitler's troops, with full air support, are now massed to a greater extent than ever before on the Soviet frontier; and the Germans are everywhere spreading rumours of coming war with the U.S.S.R. Hitler's demands seem to involve interference in the Ukraine and a say in the disposition of the Red Army. Even if Stalin can reach another agreement and keep out of war with Germany, he may wish to strengthen his hand by better relations with the Western Democracies. Certainly we have everything to gain by friendship with the U.S.S.R. We may be able to get better trade relations and to lessen Germany's hold; we may be able to co-operate rather than quarrel in Iran and other Near Eastern States, where even peoples who are suspicious of the British are at last fully aware that the real danger is absorption by Germany.

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The Sunday evening Postscript (which is really J. B. Priestley's invention) is pretty difficult to do well. Priestley himself was exceedingly popular and there was a quality of inspiration in his Postscripts which put more heart into the common listener than all the other Talks of the week put together. A. P. Herbert, whom they put on instead, just made people blush. Vernon Bartlett, I thought, did an excellent postscript; he has the faculty of uniting people of very different political opinions by a persuasive common sense. Last Sunday night I listened to W. J. Brown, who adopted the sensible method of dealing with only one point. He told the story of two German girls, one of whom was sentenced to a year's imprisonment and the other "severely birched" for giving a piece of bread to a famished Polish worker. He built the story round an extract from a German newspaper reprinted in the *Times*. In that typical instance (there are many such news items in the German press) he saw the real reason why Germany's "new order" is intolerable. A system which brings down all the ferocities of a savage penal code on children whose only crime is to show a little of the milk of human kindness is surely the most horrible the human mind can conceive. After listening to W. J. Brown, I turned to a German propagandist in English. I had not heard any of the Haw-Haws for many months and wondered what they would be at. The present idea is pure terror. Mingled with this, was propaganda to divide Britain from the United States. The British Empire was disintegrating and America had begun the process by taking over parts of the Empire in the Western hemisphere. I could imagine few more inept lines of propaganda; what answer is that to decent people who agree in loathing a social system based on cruelty and a mad perversion of human values? The man in the street minds very little if parts of the Empire do break away during this war (the imperial idea has never been popular except among a small class in this country), and, as long as we have broken the power of the Nazis, who minds if Britain is less overgrown after the war and if America has taken over some of the colonies that our Governments and capitalists have flagrantly neglected in recent years? Whether the West Indian negroes will relish the change, however, remains to be seen.

* * *

India was not, after all, entirely shelved at the Labour Party Conference. I was glad to note the angry sympathy shown by the rank and file when Sorensen and Gordon Macdonald (one of the ablest of the miner M.P.s) dealt faithfully with the policy of repression and the refusal to accept India as an equal partner in this war. I shall be told that this hopelessly over-simplifies the issue. Does it? I recommend any sincere seeker after truth to pay threepence for the documents collected and arranged in a brochure called *India and the War* (Union of Democratic Control, 32 Victoria Street, S.W.1). It is a scrupulously fair and balanced document; the only criticism is that it pays perhaps too little attention to the part played by the Princes. It includes, clearly and fairly arranged, the speeches and resolutions of British Ministers, the Governor-General, the Congress and the All-India Muslim League. The rather empty phraseology of politics reveals a deepening tension; the more lamentable because all the parties to the Indian conflict so obviously mean well, according to their lights. Congress itself, with two outstanding leaders in Gandhi and Nehru, easily wins in dialectic over the pained utterances of Mr. Amery and Lord Linlithgow. The Congress argument is watertight. "If Great Britain fights for the maintenance and extension of democracy, then she must necessarily end Imperialism in her own possessions, establish full democracy in India, and the Indian people must have the right of self-determination by framing their own constitution through a Constituent Assembly without external interference." The refusal of that demand has meant Congress non-co-operation and 5,000 political prisoners. Meantime, the Muslim League, with Pakistan as an Indian Sudetenland, demands its own self-determination and Mr. Jinnah's movement has of course grown in importance during the war. The pamphlet states all the views.

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The National Council for Civil Liberties which held a largely attended conference on the Freedom of the Press last week-end, has published a useful little pamphlet called *Freedom of the Press in Wartime*, by H. J. Laski (price 3*d*.). The issue raised by the suppression of the *Daily Worker* is treated from the legal and constitutional point of view. Mr. Laski builds up a strong case against the use of the Home Secretary's summary powers to suppress any paper whatever without giving it the right of reply in a Court of Law. It is of course true that when, in the emotional atmosphere of war, the Government has a case against a newspaper, no Court of Law can be immune from the effects of that atmosphere. The result would probably be the same in either case. But the necessity of taking the issue to a Court of Law would be a check on a future Home Secretary who might be inclined to abuse his power, and it is desirable in a democracy that evidence should always be heard before conviction.

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The most forthright criticism of the Labour Party Conference appeared in the *Tribune*, now an extremely lively and readable paper. The Editorial Board accused the Labour Party of systematic infanticide over a period of years in which all youthful initiative had been stifled. The upshot appeared to be the need of starting a new group inside the Labour Party: a modern version of the I.L.P. The need is obvious; the problem is that one does not see the necessary leadership. The issues on which the rank and file really feel strongly are dealt with in the *Tribune*. The cases, so common in this war, of workers who want to win the war and cannot get their employers to do their job efficiently, the absurdity of a threatened coal shortage in a country bulging with coal, the ramps and rackets in commodities, and spit and polish and the snobbery and class consciousness that persist in the Services—these and a score of other matters of the Home Front are things that really require attention. The *Tribune* is the most lively "popular" weekly that the Labour movement has had since a dunder-headed Board ruined the *New Leader* by getting rid of Brailsford, who had made it a great power in the land.

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The spread of fighting to Syria and the threat of massed German bombing raids urgently raise the problem of a comprehensive mobilisation of the Palestine Jews, especially as American press comments on Mr. Eden's speech about Arab unity (in which Palestine was studiously left unmentioned) reveals a certain divergence between American opinion and the British Foreign Office on this subject. The Zionist offer at the outbreak of war to raise a Jewish army of 60,000 was rejected at the time for political and Imperial reasons, some of them probably weightier than Zionist spokesmen would admit. On the other hand, certain Colonial officials have definitely let their prejudices degenerate into pure obstructionism on this matter. To the authors of Cairo Bulletins, for instance, Palestine Jews in the British Middle Eastern forces are still as invisible as German and Italian troops in Spain once were to the Foreign Office. Actually, about 10,000 Palestine Jews have so far been enrolled in British R.A.F. ground staffs and army units, some as ordinary infantry, others in the most highly technical jobs. The majority have already seen fighting in Lybia, Eritrea or Greece, and from all accounts acquitted themselves well. In the present acute danger of Palestine, however, this is no longer enough, especially in view of U.S.A. interest. The suggestion made this week by the Military Correspondent of the *Evening Standard*, that two Palestine Pioneer divisions should be specially mobilised for the construction, fortification and defence of our air bases, seems an excellent one. It would obviate certain political difficulties. Also, the Palestine Jews, already engaged on most fortification work in Palestine itself, include thousands of experts familiar with tractors and concrete mixers. Their Palestine experience, whether during the extraordinary growth of Tel Aviv and Haifa, or during the period of setting up newly fortified settlements in dangerous Arab country overnight, has trained them in that ruthless, organised tempo and versatility demanded by modern war. The need for strengthening our air bases is urgent. It is to be hoped, therefore, that this suggestion will be taken up, and a valuable source of skilled man-power in the Middle East fully utilised.

* * *

I am glad to learn that at least one of the restrictions placed on foreign seamen, about which I wrote a fortnight ago, has been removed. On the day before my note appeared the Home Secretary issued an order exempting some foreign seamen from certain provisions of the Aliens Order. Foreign seamen who are engaged in coastal traffic round this island are no longer subjected to an examination on each occasion that they set foot on British soil. If they are engaged in coastal trade they need no longer obtain passes each time they land; they are now to be regarded as residents in this country. They have to register with the police with the name of their ship endorsed on their certificate. As long as they continue to serve in ships which do not touch at ports outside Great Britain, they are exempt from the stock interrogations, and Chief Constables are asked to grant them reasonable exemptions from the curfew imposed on aliens. This, of course, leaves untouched the question of the treatment of alien sailors who have called at foreign ports; here Security is naturally anxious about espionage and propaganda. I do not suppose that anyone will complain if the authorities take precautions against this danger. Which only makes it all the more necessary that the examining officers should do their job with the minimum of discourtesy and irritation. It is exceedingly important from the Security angle—does not our Security depend on the good will of these men?—that foreign sailors risking their lives for us should feel that we are grateful and welcome them as our friends. I hope that here, too, practice will improve ; I am satisfied that the Home Office is really aware of the importance of making every reasonable concession to these foreign seamen, and that the officials have been asked to be as reasonable as they can and grant shore leave as freely as possible.

* * *

Max Plowman, who died suddenly of pneumonia last week, was a very remarkable man. The number of men who build their own faith out of their own experience, identify themselves with it and live by it, is very small indeed. When Max Plowman called himself a Pacifist he did not mean that he shrank from war or that he pretended you could stop Hitler by being nice to him, or make the world good, or side-step your responsibilities by refusing to fight. He meant by Pacifism a way of life from which he would not be deterred, whatever the consequences to himself or others. He became a Pacifist when serving as a soldier on the Western Front in the last war ; he just went to his colonel and explained what had happened to him ! He tells the story in his book, *A Faith Called Pacifism*. I should say that the effect of that book must have been to stop many doubters from being Pacifists ; it demands so much and is so uncompromising. Any sincere reader would be shamed by it from a half-hearted allegiance to so revolutionary and difficult a religion. In this war Max Plowman found things he could do for the community. He could test out the possibilities of co-operative farming ; he could help people who would otherwise be neglected ; and he could write what he believed and remain unalterably his genuine, lovable, rather crabbed, and highly individual self.

* * *

The trouble at the Ministry of Information has come to a head. Mr. Duff Cooper is supposed to be in charge of publicity, but the plans of the Ministry are constantly thwarted by the Service departments. Sometimes decisions vitally affecting publicity are taken over the head of the Ministry. The Press has now revealed that Sir Malcolm Robertson has been appointed to be the head of the British Council, and that Mr. Duff Cooper was not even consulted about the appointment. This, I gather, was the last straw.

* * *

Read consecutively two books now published at *6d*. *If Hitler Comes*, by Douglas Brown and Christopher Serpell (Faber's Guild Books Series) was published first in August, 1940, under the title of *Loss of Eden*. I recommended it in these columns at that time to the Ministry of Information as a brilliantly readable and an appallingly lifelike account of what would happen if the Nazis dominated this country. When you have read this, turn to Saki's *When William Came*, in the Penguins. It was originally published in 1913 and is a fanciful story of an Englishman who was in Siberia when war began between England and Germany, and who came back to find England defeated. He finds it all very disagreeable ; he is not allowed to walk on the grass, and more serious still, the German victory has left England to exploitation by German Jews !

* * *

Overheard in a shelter. Agitated shelterer walks up and down instead of lying down. Warden : " Hi', mate, tarn in. You're quite safe down here." Agitated shelterer : " Perhaps so, but its more difficult to hit a moving target."

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of this column goes this week to Mr. Davies.

All cuttings should be addressed to " This England," 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

There is a simple solution to the cigarette shortage problem. . . . Let women stop smoking. . . . If they gave up the habit their health would be better and tobacco would be available for those for whom Nature intended it. I refer to men.—Letter in *Daily Telegraph*.

What is clear beyond question is that the immediate foreground is obscure.—Article in *Daily Telegraph*.

" I do not like all this talk about reconstruction after the war," declared Dr. John Murray, Principal of University College of the South-West. " It is not a good foundation for winning the war," he said. " Let us remember this is an old-fashioned—good old-fashioned—nation, and it has gone a good way. After the war it will not need to be turned upside down by Hitler or by ourselves. We know we have lived in the past decently, and we shall go on doing so in the future."—*Totnes Times and Devon News*.

It is well that those in authority are wise enough not to employ any Gestapo-like methods for banishing the British dog from the British home, and thereby dealing a greater blow at civilian morale than the most ferocious blitz could ever achieve.—Letter in *News Chronicle*.

In the midst of war we must make ready for peace—a peace wherein investment and finance will play the decisive part. We must therefore continue steadfast in our great traditions and share our prosperity in true fellowship with the whole world, basing our policies, as in days of old, on a stable pound sterling, good faith, and the sanctity of contract—above all, on the stable pound. It is in that hope I look for the dawn of a brighter day when peace may come floating in on wings of unfettered money justly-measured.—Chairman at company meeting reported in *The Times*.

'TIS PITY . . .

" There is not a single German soldier either in Syria or Lebanon."—Pétain June 9th.

" It is not even clear that French military collaboration with the Axis is confined in Syria."—Cordell Hull, June 10th.

WHEN France, great Marshal, turned to you,
Defeated but not yet enslaved,
And in your soldier's honour knew
Her honour saved,

She read in history's backward page
Your steadfastness in her defence
And reckoned you were past the age
Of innocence.

The rape of sister States had shown
Force takes from virtue no rebuff
And bleating innocence alone
Is not enough.

But when of trusted foes you preach
France recognises with dismay
The age of innocence may reach
Senile decay.

Old men, though crowned with heroes' fame
Who hand their daughters to the foe
The world has branded with a name
You would not know.

Your soldier's honour's mere disguise
Convenient for the pander's trade,
And gagged and bound, before your eyes
France is betrayed.

SAGITTARIUS

THE LOCK IN THE INDIAN BRAKES

THERE is a Marxian Left in India which desires separation from the British Commonwealth because Britain stands in the way of ending Indian poverty by Marxian methods. But every Indian statement is not to be taken at its face value, and what the rest of politically conscious India desires—and here I include Princes and fighting men as well as politicians—and desires with a passionate intensity, is equality of political status for India. Equality means a share of the parliamentary institutions which Indians have learned to admire ; not some alternative such as a Presidential system, which they suspect to be a device for fobbing them off with an inferior article, or an excuse for further delay.

When Britain entered the war the Dominions decided for themselves whether they would participate. But India was not so much as asked. For her it was : Eyes Front, Quick March ! The British rulers behaved with perfect constitutional propriety, and with complete lack of political tact. It was a wound to self-respect : a blazoning of inequality. Hence these tears ; the resignation of the seven Congress Ministries ; anti-war speeches, and the inevitable crowding of the jails with men and women not one in a hundred of whom desires to stop the war till the Nazi menace is ended ; while popular sympathy is thus diverted from the victims of totalitarian aggression to the victims of British justice.

Mr. Amery is willing to do certain things, provided that the Indian parties agree together on the essentials of a settlement. But it is precisely this stipulation of preliminary agreement which the Indian finds unreasonable. He has a subconscious expectation that Government will settle the question if he fails to settle it; and he has this expectation because democratic experience has not hitherto been assimilated. In the meanwhile he must not give away his party's case by exhibiting a willingness to concede any point. But he may *acquiesce*—grumblingly, perhaps—if those who are responsible can divine the reasonable solution; and at the present moment he is manifestly waiting for Government to make the move. It is not too much to say that, in Indian political negotiation, there is a law of *progressive acquiescence*. Let us come down to arithmetic. There are probably seven members of the Governor-General's Executive Council, but the existing law allows of indefinite increase. Three must, by law, be officials. The other members might be Indian public men for anything that the law prescribes. Adjustments are possible when public interests are at stake, and India is not lacking in able men who have acquired their experience in the Provincial Ministries, in the Indian States, and in the world of business and finance. Under my proposals four places will be filled, as soon as convenient, by the nomination of representative Indians of the parties willing to co-operate, making a non-official Indian majority of the Council. Under the existing law, the majority has the deciding voice, provided that the Governor-General may refer an important question on which he differs from his Council for the orders of the Secretary of State.

At the same time that the four places are filled by non-official Indians it will be announced that five more places are held vacant, to be filled by members of the Congress and of the Muslim League—say three by the former, and two by the latter—as soon as these bodies become willing to co-operate. The argument is that the experience of the actual working of the preliminary non-official majority on the Council will convince the parties which have held themselves aloof in the first stage. It is obvious, without announcement, that the existence, under war conditions, of a predominantly non-official and Indian Executive Council, which has successfully asserted the rights of a majority under the existing law, will determine the direction which post-war constitutional development must take. In other words, the Executive Council, when supplemented by an additional element representative of the Indian States, will be transformed into a Responsible Ministry.

As additional measures, India must be represented at the Peace Conference by Indian public men and women, mostly nominated by the new Executive Council, others being added by the Government on account of the Indian States. The Secretary of State should carry out his plan, to set up a War Advisory Committee associating together representatives of British India and the Indian States, without awaiting agreement on the distribution of seats, but proceeding on the assumption of *progressive acquiescence*. H.M. the King should be asked to appoint an Indian Member for Defence (not a military officer, as before) in addition to the Commander-in-Chief. And an opportunity must be seized to reveal to the Indian imagination a different side of Britain's activities. The restoration of the Emperor Haile Selassie to the throne of Abyssinia offers such an opportunity, since British and Indian arms together have effected the restoration. The Emperor must be asked to send Abyssinian representatives to accompany an unofficial British mission of goodwill to India, and to appeal to the parties to sink their differences in a united war of liberation. The sympathy felt in India for the Free Chinese is even greater than that felt for the Abyssinians. If Japan involves herself in the war, the Generalissimo Chiang-Kai-shek, leader of another people rightly struggling to be free, should be asked to add Chinese representatives. Representatives of the British Dominions which have acquired the reputation of colour prejudice should not be included.

From time to time it becomes convenient to redistribute the great offices of State among the men and women who are carrying the titanic burdens of a wartime Commonwealth. The opportunity of one such change must be taken to mark the importance of India in a struggle, which daily approaches nearer to her borders, by appointing an Indian public man to the office of Secretary of State for India. A Prime Minister of a Province, whose soldier sons have carried the flag to a score of victories; a Rajput Maharaja who has maintained the glory of an immemorial ancestry by a long record of good government at home and good service abroad; a public man of wide and liberal sympathies, who has served alike the Crown and the Indian people and has recently renewed the evidence of his continuing search for the way of peace. There is a wealth of choice, if there is sufficient imagination to see how such an act would disperse the fogs of Indian suspicion.

I need add nothing to this article on the subject of the return of the Ministries in the seven Congress Provinces, and the release of the prisoners who are in jail for speaking against participation in the war. If the plan proposed be adopted, and be manifestly in the way of achieving the progressive success for which I hope, these things will follow as matters of course.

JOHN MAYNARD

THE COUNTRYSIDE DURING AND AFTER

WE are, it is generally understood, to have a new world after the war, and everybody agrees that it is to be a planned one. Indeed, two Government Departments have already been established to consider what sort of a planned world it shall be. There are, it is obvious, many points of departure from which a plan may start; the health of the people, the quality of their houses, the nature and extent of their education, the location of industries, the status of agriculture, and so on. If in this article I say nothing of these interests it is not because I do not think them important, but because I know them to have many spokesmen, whereas from the point of departure I am proposing to take up, there are, so far as I can see at the moment, no starters. It is that of amenity. After the war I want to see something of the beauty that was England preserved to rest the bodies, to enrich the minds and to refresh the spirits of its inhabitants.

That this beauty has already been seriously impaired by the present generation, few would be found to deny. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries made England beautiful; the nineteenth century, through the first Industrial Revolution, destroyed the beauty of its towns; the twentieth, through the second, the revolution in transport, has destroyed much of the beauty of its country. Our towns have burst like bombs and scattered their débris far and wide over the countryside; our roads lie upon the face of the land like weals left by the whiplash of civilisation; upon every hill there is perched a villa, while every valley is inflamed by an outbreak of the pink rash. Of all this which belongs to the past I say nothing here. I confine myself to making one point which is matter of general agreement. It is that, if the destruction of the English countryside continues in the second half of the twentieth century as vigorously as during the first, there will in Southern England, at the end of the century, be neither town nor country, but only a single suburb sprawling amorphously from London to the coast. It follows that if beauty is to be preserved, England must be planned. But why, it may be asked, raise the matter now?

There is a current fallacy which regards the war and the peace which is to follow it not for what they are, the overlapping phases of a developing revolution in human affairs, but as two juxtaposed but separate slices of history, with the corollary that what is done in the one has no bearing upon the other; that, in fact, we can proceed cheerfully with the measures necessary for the winning of the war without considering their effect upon the peace.

This question of the future of the countryside plainly illustrates the operations of the fallacy. It has, for example, been agreed for some years past that we must have National Parks, and all the plans for reconstruction after the war with which I am acquainted put National Parks high in the list of their requirements. It is also agreed that for the role of National Park the Lake District is the first and most eligible candidate. There has recently been published the annual report of the Friends of the Lake District, a body which exists to preserve the beauty of the Lakes from the thousand and one forces which seek to develop, to exploit, or to destroy it. The capacity of armies to destroy beauty has always been notorious; nor in this war has it grown less. Where the army goes is a devastated area: trees cut down, houses go up; the turf is gashed and ploughed into a sea of mud; lanes are turned into concrete roads, while the surface of the land is studded with concrete, bond with barbed wire, and littered with dumps and rubbish heaps. Now the Lake District is particularly vulnerable to this treatment. Tanks, camps, aerodromes, factories, pumps, dumps, units and bases for this, that and the other have here a more deadly effect than anywhere else in England. They destroy remoteness, shatter peace, clutter the valleys with litter and rubble, blur and scar the bare outlines of the fells. One must needs speak vaguely from the nature of the case. One cannot say what there is or where it is. As the Secretary of the Friends of the Lake District says in the admirable report just referred to: "Under the Defence Regulations it is impossible to organise public opposition to official claims—for this would reveal the nature of them and their whereabouts. In effect, propaganda and press correspondence and petitions are dead. . . . The press, abbreviated and always over full, has little or no space, even where discussion is allowable, for conflicts about injury to beauty." I can only, then, ask readers to take it for granted that the encroachments of the Service Dpartments are spoiling the Lakes, and that those who love them are debarred by the very nature of the case from invoking the weapon of public protest.

The current destruction of natural beauty in the most pre-eminently suitable of all our National Park areas seems to me to constitute an outstanding example of the fallacy to which I have drawn attention. Not only is the beauty of the English countryside peculiarly vulnerable; once the wounds are delivered, they will take a hundred years to heal. If we allow the beauty of the Lake District to be destroyed or impaired, we are depriving our posterity of a national asset.

Let us suppose that civilisation turns its present corner; then we may not unreasonably look forward to a period of considerable prosperity. The application of science to industry will increase output and diminish the hours of human toil, with the result that, given a reasonably equitable distribution of industry's products, we may look forward to a future in which most men are assured of a comfort and a competence in return for four or five hours' machine-minding a day.

How will they use the vast tracts of leisure thereby accruing? One answer is, unfortunately, all too clear. It is that the leisure of the many will become increasingly the prey of those who will not scruple to exploit the public for their profit, debauching its taste with whatever mass-produced, creation-saving, energy economising entertainments they will see most profit in providing for its degradation. That is the way to the "Brave New World," to the production of a community of robots who have accepted a life of meaningless routine punctuated with insignificant sensation, and who deny, because they do not know that life has any other meaning or values or possibilities. They do not know, because they have never been given the chance to experience, and they have never been given the chance to experience because the conditions in which the experience of spiritual values is alone possible, will have been destroyed by their predecessors.

The English are not as a race particularly sensitive to beauty in art. Nature is the channel through which the appeal of what is beautiful most easily reaches us. We have inherited the most beautiful countryside, as we have inherited the ugliest towns of any nation in the world, and if after the war we are to live the life of free and adult human beings, developing our natures to the full and realising all that we have it in us to be, we must preserve that environment of natural beauty which is not only necessary to the satisfaction of our instinctive craving for country sights and sounds, but is a condition of those higher experiences of the spirit which natural beauty alone can invoke. If, in order to preserve England, we are destroying the conditions in which Englishmen can reach their full stature, then in a new and more subtle way we are winning the war only to lose the peace.

What, then, must we do? Here are a few suggestions whose adoption constitutes the minimum conditions for the preservation of the beauty that was England.

(1) The putting into practice of the recommendations of the Government commission on National Parks. This means that the Lakes, Snowdonia, the Sussex Downs, Dartmoor, Dovedale—the reader can add areas to taste—should be safeguarded now against Service depredations and industrial development, and later against commercial exploitation. Existing occupations such as sheep farming and agriculture should be maintained; free access should be given to walkers, cyclists and motorists, though no fresh roads should be laid down. Steps should be taken to provide accommodation for visitors where necessary, but the placing of new buildings should be strictly controlled.

(2) Access should be given to all uncultivated areas, such as mountains and moorlands, for all who want to use them irrespective of the rights of sportsmen.

(3) Access should also be given to the sea coast which should be rigorously zoned against further building.

(4) There should be restrictions upon the growth of towns. These should not be allowed to spread either in the mass or in a sprawl of sporadic buildings beyond strictly defined limits.

(5) Certain roads should be set aside for the exclusive use of motorists. From others, and especially from lanes, they should be excluded.

(6) There should be established a Ministry of Amenities to hold a watching brief over all proposed developments from the point of view of amenity, and to co-ordinate the many sporadic and at present often unrelated efforts of the voluntary societies to preserve the countryside. Such a ministry would have to take powers to buy up land threatened by development and, therefore, already inflated in rent, at its pre-inflation rent.

(7) Plans for this Ministry should be laid now. Meanwhile, there should be set up, under the auspices of Sir John Reith's Department, a joint body containing representatives of the C.P.R.E., the National Trust, the Ramblers' Association, and the Youth Hostels Association, together with other societies interested in the preservation of the countryside, with powers to stand up to the Service Departments on questions of amenity, so that when national interests are not overriding, the effect of a particular scheme upon natural beauty shall be at least *one* of the considerations to be taken into account when weighing its desirability. At present the amenity interest is wholly unrepresented in such deliberations.

C. E. M. Joad

ON A RAW POTATO

The other day I woke up to find that I could not get out of bed with normal ease on account of a sharp attack of rheumatism or sciatica, or whatever the pain was. I do not ask for sympathy on that account: I have had a life freer from physical pain than most people. In fact, I have scarcely experienced pangs of this kind since I was in my twenties. Even then the pain was nothing worth complaining about. It merely prevented me from doing such things as stooping to pick up a sock from the floor, where I always threw my socks in those degenerate days. In time, however, I learnt how, while sitting in a chair, to pick up a sock with my toes and transfer it to my hands, after which dressing proceeded without much difficulty. Again, I could not cross my legs without taking one knee in my hands and lifting it gently on to the other. So ordinary did these processes seem to me that I was surprised when other people were amused by them as the eccentricities of an intensely lazy young man. A friend with whom I had to share a bedroom in a small Donegal hotel laughed uproariously when he saw me in the morning stretching out my toes and picking up a sock slowly and carefully from the carpet. He obviously thought that I was posing and doing a Weary-Willie comic turn for his benefit. "That's the laziest thing I've ever seen a man do in my life," he said. And that was all the sympathy I got—or deserved: for the pain was not bad and many other things were good.

The pain vanished, I do not know why, and there have been few recurrences of it till the other morning when to my surprise I found it almost impossible to reach my right foot in order to pull my sock on. What a fool one feels as one lets oneself gingerly down the stairs one by one! As one hirples along the road one has a shameful sense of being a public spectacle. Hoisting oneself into a taxi, one tumbles back into the seat like a man overcome with drink. Getting out of a train with difficulty and, fearing that a fellow-traveller might think from my contortions that I was in liquor, I explained to him that I had a touch of rheumatism. "That's bad," he said. "Have you ever tried carrying a raw potato?" "No," I told him; "I've often heard about that cure, but I'd quite forgotten it." "Well," he said, "I've never had rheumatism myself—touch wood—but I remember meeting a chap in Manchester who told me that he had had terrible rheumatism; that he had tried every kind of cure and given himself up as a cripple for life when someone advised him to carry a raw potato in his hip pocket. He decided to try this, though he didn't much believe in it, and, according to his story, he was feeling so well before long that he was not only able to go about his work again but to play golf. I thought this was a bit superstitious and that the cure was just a coincidence, and I was telling the thing as a rather amusing story a day or so later to a man in my line of business. He gave a wry smile. 'Do you know,' he said, 'exactly the same thing happened to me? I was tortured with rheumatism, and could do nothing to get rid of it till someone mentioned the raw-potato remedy. I thought I'd try it, and, by Jove, it worked. I got cured, and I've never had rheumatism since.'" "It certainly sounds worth trying," I said, "I'll get hold of a raw potato as soon as I reach home." "They say it goes all shrivelled and black in time," he told me, "as it absorbs the acids out of the system." "I'll wear it if necessary," said I, "till it goes blue."

When I got home I had a smallish potato washed and dried, and dropped it—not without scepticism, yet not without hope—into my hip pocket. As I sat waiting for it to cure me, I wondered whether I was not being superstitious and, having wondered that, I went on to wonder whether, on the contrary, I was not really being scientific. Readiness to experiment is surely a mark of the scientific spirit. I know some people who give the impression that they think they are being scientifically up to date if they doubt all kinds of things which their ancestors believed—doubt them and decide without further investigation that they are erroneous. Doubt is an excellent thing, but only if it leads to investigation. The people I have in mind, however, claim the right not only to doubt, but to deny all sorts of things without having ever given ten minutes' thought to the matter. Many people deny the existence of ghosts, for example, not because they have taken a scientific interest in the subject, but merely because they look on a belief in ghosts as absurd. Nothing could be more absurd, however, than to regard a belief in ghosts as absurd. Men, civilised and uncivilised, have believed in them for centuries, and most of us have met people at least as intelligent and honest as ourselves who declared that they had seen them. I have never seen a ghost myself and I trust that I never shall see a ghost; but I think that, on the evidence, a belief in ghosts—whatever the explanation of the apparitions may be—is in some instances more scientific than superstitious.

I confess I am myself a prey to doubt in many matters, and that I often doubt, not because I have any reason to do so, but because it has long been the fashion to doubt. Take astrology, for example. What reason have I for doubting the genuineness of this ancient science? I fancy that the majority of people ceased to believe in astrology not because they had reasoned the matter out, but because it had become associated with so many imposters. Why should an ignoramus such as I am disbelieve in the genuineness of astrology except for such unscientific reasons? There was a time when the leaders of thought believed it it as dogmatically as the leaders of thought disbelieve in it to-day. They probably had brains as good as any to be found in modern Oxford and Cambridge, and they used arguments for their belief that I, for one, cannot refute.

In a recent volume in the Loeb Library, *Manetho Ptolemy*, "*Tetrabiblos*," we are told how among our European ancestors astrology swept all before it in the scientific world as the theory of evolution did in the nineteenth and as the theory of psychoanalysis did in the twentieth centuries. "By the second century of our era," says Dr. F. E. Robbins, the translator of Ptolemy, "the triumph of astrology was complete. With few exceptions every one, from emperor to the lowliest slave, believed in it, and having weathered the criticism of the New Academy, astrology was defended by the powerful Stoic sect. Its position was strengthened by the prevalence of stellar and solar religion throughout the world, and it even captured the sciences, such as medicine, botany, mineralogy, chemistry and ethnography. Furthermore, this continued to be the situation, in general, well into the Renaissance. Regiomontanus, Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, Galileo, Kepler and Leibnitz all either practised astrology themselves or countenanced its practice." The *Tetrabiblos*, we are told, "enjoyed almost the authority of a Bible among the astrological writers of a thousand years or more." Is it not then a little unscientific of me to wave aside the considered opinions of Copernicus, Tycho Brahe and Galileo merely because it is the modern custom to wave them aside? I should respect my scepticism more if I had ever enquired into the evidence on which the beliefs of these great men were based. But I am too lazy to do so. Besides, when I read books on astrology, I cannot with the best will in the world follow the jargon, and I soon feel my brain whirling round as though I were ballooning through the airless air of the stratosphere. For example, a chapter of Ptolemy is headed: "Of the Familiarities between Countries and the Triplicities and Stars." I cannot understand that. Nor am I illuminated when he goes on: "Now of the four triangular formations recognised in the zodiac . . . the one which consists of Aries, Leo and Sagittarius is north-western, and is chiefly dominated by Jupiter on account of the north wind, but Mars joins in its government because of the south-west wind." Yet that is a fairly simple sentence for one of the profounder astrologers to write. What puzzles me is why I, who cannot understand what Ptolemy is talking about, should take it for granted that he is talking nonsense. Why should I swallow all that we are told nowadays about the influences of carrots and be unable to swallow what we were once told about the influences of the stars? Is it less likely that a waxing moon should favour seeds newly sown in my vegetable garden than a waxing vitamin should preserve me from night-blindness? We believe as we disbelieve, however, on trust. We acquiesce superstitiously in the learned opinions only of our own time.

Witchcraft is another thing in the reality of which we have ceased to believe, not as a result of examining the evidence on both sides, but mainly becaused civilised men became tired of believing in it. Belief in it resulted in such a plague of horrors that rational men, being pragmatists, decided that a belief which was the root of so much evil should be destroyed. Few of us who are sceptics about witchcraft have ever made a scientific study of the subject. We disbelieve, not on the evidence, but on instinct. G. K. Chesterton and other writers have maintained that the evidence in favour of the reality of witchcraft is overwhelming. Even if it is, however, I think it is a good thing that men came to ignore it. But then I have not a scientific mind.

Perhaps, indeed, it is only in regard to cures generally regarded as superstitious that I reveal a more scientific temper than most of my fellows. I am inclined to experiment with almost any cure, from the water of a holy well to a patent medicine, from the repetitions of Coué to a witch's potion. I like reading the catalogues of herbalists, and always listen with interest to those who have been healed by herbal remedies. Unfortunately, experiments in healing take more thought and time than an indolent man has at his disposal. I once bought an iodine locket and forgot to wear it. I bought a bottle of dandelion coffee and forgot to finish it. Still, the scientific spirit was there in embryo. I feel it coming to birth again every time I become conscious of the raw potato in my hip-pocket. The evidence so far is that it is working wonders. I am already all but cured. The moral is, never have a superstitious disbelief in superstitions. Be scientific; investigate—even if it involves walking about London with a raw potato in your pocket.

Y. Y.

VIRGINIA WOOLF

[*This article by the late Sir Hugh Walpole must be one of the last things he wrote before his death. We are very glad to print it, not only for the portrait it gives of Virginia Woolf, but for the delightful self-revelation of its author visiting in Bloomsbury.*]

I READ *Jacob's Room* for the first time in a Turkish Bath in Marseilles. I didn't open it until I had reached my warm, dry cubicle and been rolled and rolled securely inside sheets and blankets by the fat one-eyed attendant who was afterward murdered for raping the young daughter of the bath's patron.

All this may seem irrelevant now. It did not seem so then, for I was lazy and comfortable after my bath and not at all inclined for reading. Everything was then relevant. I looked up lazily at the one-eyed attendant and said: "I feel in my bones you will be murdered one day."

"Very likely, monsieur," he agreed, smiling.

It is my only successful prophecy. I must have slumbered, but later I awoke and began *Jacob's Room*. When I came to Jacob and the sheep's skull on the seashore I sat up, my wrappings falling from me, and I knew that I had found one of the books of my life. The books of *my* life are supposed by my detractors to be too many. They are not really so, but they are very varied and include *Vathek*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Clarissa*, *The Prelude*, *Bleak House*, *Death's Jest Book*, *The Woodlanders*, and *Siren Land*. They have no reason—my likings for these particular works. They may be good or bad. *Jacob's Room* is one of them. *Orlando* is another.

No other of Virginia Woolf's works are in this personal collection of mine, although I think *Mrs. Dalloway* her best novel, and *The Waves* her most beautiful poem. This reminiscence, however, is not to be about her books, but about herself. I mention my reading of *Jacob's Room* only because it was my true introduction to her. I had read *The Voyage Out* and some small things. Before the 1914 War I had been startled by reading that Mr. Clive Bell said that there were three living English novelists who really mattered, and only three. One of them was Virginia Woolf. At that time—1913 I think it was—this saying was a dark one. I did not think then, I do not think now, that Clive Bell, a delightful writer and an enchanting companion, knew or cared much about the art of novel-writing. Nevertheless, his words had an oracular sound. Who then was Virginia Woolf? I read *The Voyage Out*. I was not greatly impressed by it. It appeared to me stuffy, laboured and derivative.

So it was that *Jacob's Room* enchanted me all the more by its surprise. I thought it marvellous that Jacob, who scarcely speaks from the first to the last, should be so intimate to me, and so endearing. It was this book, I suppose, that made me unjust to Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*, read by me at this time. How melodramatic and cheap did it seem and still does seem beside *Jacob's Room!* When later than this I saw Virginia Woolf I was terrified. Literary ladies from Rhoda Broughton through Katherine Mansfield and Rebecca West to Gertrude Stein have worn, from time to time, the robes of priestesses engaged in throwing fragrant incense on to their own altars. Katherine Mansfield's Letters, brilliant and touching, seem to me exactly to do this.

Virginia Woolf had at that first meeting for me the air of a priestess, but of a priestess who was at the same time for me strangely home-familiar. I mean that in her beautiful deep, slow voice, her delicate hostess care of one at the tea-table, her courtesies and dignities, she resembled many of my relations in my own youth—aunts and cousins; she was, in fact, a lady.

I don't know whether it is snobbery that comes in here, but I do know that I had been growing tired, for a long time past, of meeting so occasionally the beautiful courteous manners of my childhood. I had so often been told that they were stuffy, hypocritical and especially restricting to females.

It was pleasant to discover that Virginia, who, more than any other woman writer of her time, was modernist in her passionate championship of women, could not help but be courteous in the Victorian tradition even had she wished to. And she did not so wish.

As to throwing incense on her own altar, that was not at all the thing at this first tea-party. Virginia Woolf was ironic about her own work and delicately humorous about others'. I had discovered before this that Bloomsbury was not the mutual admiration society the outside world supposed it. Nowhere in Fleet Street had I watched so gay and ribald a treatment of Helen Schlegel's absurd baby from *Howard's End* as in Bloomsbury, nor was Aldous Huxley's companionate Encyclopaedia considered entirely serious in Tavistock Square.

At that first tea-time in that little room with the Duncan Grant murals, the muffins and the two conscious, watching, over-hearing teapots I tasted the best honey of my life. And always, afterwards, up to a year ago, that honey was there.

Nevertheless, I was frightened. I was frightened, as it has been all my life my nature to be frightened, by people who think before they speak. I don't mean, of course, that that is a thing I never do, but words rush from me more swiftly than they should. Now Virginia saw folly more quickly than it flies and always she slew it without a second's compunction. Not fools, I hasten to say, but folly. Of fools she could often be exceedingly tender and she enjoyed them sometimes as friends.

My own fears increased with my own sense that I was not nearly such a fool as I seemed to be, and then there came a day when she attacked me fiercely for my printed praise of a certain novel. This was a mystical story concerned with death and poetry. Virginia attacked it on the ground of the insincerity of the author, whom she did not know. It was humbug; he did not mean a word that he said.

Now I happened to know the author, and I was certain that whatever else he might be, he was sincere. I told her some facts about him and suddenly her interest in the curious psychology of that author overcame all her dislike of his book. All she wanted was the truth and I gave her as much as I could of it. From that day I was never afraid of her again. I saw that if with her at least I was not a humbug, I need have no fear. I saw that her eagerness to know the truth was inexhaustible. In this she exactly resembled Henry James, whose curiosity about this strange confusion called life was without end. Virginia took your stories from you in two ways. Either she was gay and creative, would snatch something from you, make something charming, fantastic, beautiful from it, and then hand it back to you pretending it was all your own. Or, more serious, she would investigate and investigate, delving further and further—and then when you had given her everything you could, then would come that little pause, as it used to come in the old days with James, and that unspoken question: "Well—is that all? Can't we find anything else? Surely you know that we haven't discovered the *real* pattern in the carpet?"

Nevertheless, I told her more than I ever told any other human being, more than I shall ever tell any human being again.

Then it was that I discovered that beneath the mocking humour, the sometimes stern enquiry, the sharp wonder, the restless investigation, there was a kindliness of heart and tenderness of feeling rich with an intense personal charity.

I remember my surprise at finding that she realised, better than any save my closest friend, the suffering that a truly fearful attack of arthritis caused me. We are, most of us, bored with the pains and agonies of our friends. At any rate, we cannot listen to tales of woe for very long. She did not say a great deal nor invite many details, but I loved her from that time.

I suppose then that all of us who were her friends feel a kind of bewilderment. Always when some friend leaves us in physical death, we realise with a new sharpness that *that* particular human being was unique. The uniqueness, while the friend was still here, was veiled. At any time we might see the friend again, write or receive a letter, have a message. The uniqueness composed of such various qualities had been sometimes annoying or boring or exacerbating. But now—how one longs for him to open the door, stand, smiling, in the doorway!

And if that is true of other friends, how poignantly is it true of Virginia Woolf! How, as I am writing this, I long to be able to go up the narrow stairs again to see that little book-bursting room, to greet the two intelligent teapots and hear that deep, lovely voice explaining to some other friend a foible, an absurdity of her own, of mine, of a stranger in the street.

Her loss is something from which I shall now never escape.

HUGH WALPOLE

BETTER TIMES

THE tea-leaves indicate this week impacts, repercussions, events moving towards a climax which may or may not be of importance. There will be conflicts in East and West, conflagrations nearer home. I see a dark man across the waters plotting ruin. He was born under Mazawattee. He is given dubious help by others. He will die a violent death (but not this week). His days are numbered and perhaps he knows it. Watch Mr. H. carefully. He has a way of disguising his failures. What looks like a physical triumph may be, in fact, moral defeat. The end is nearer than we think, whether we think so or not. Good day for bilking: Tuesday.

How to Turn "Hamlet" into a Detective Story

When rewriting *Hamlet* as a detective story remember that the crux of the affair is the Royal Murders. The "late king" has had poison poured in his ear—by whom? And when Hamlet comes on his uncle apparently at prayers, it is to find that Claudius, too, is dead from the same poison.

Hamlet takes up the investigation at once. He is in the direct line of sleuths, with Leslie Howard-like monologues before the mirror, classical tags, fencing bouts, theatricals and wit at the expense of Sergeant Polonius (the local man, awaiting instructions from the Yard). He should smoke Kyprinos Special and quote Eliot.

From the first, all the characters are suspect: Ophelia for her albomania (white dresses, lilies, purity), the Queen (a husband-poisoner—whom will she marry next?), Laertes, with his violent anti-Royalist tendencies. There is a strong case against each. The climax occurs while Inspector Fortinbras is on his way to Elsinore. "Gertrude's voice was as smooth as cream, but it held a threat, too." Hamlet is cross-questioning his mother; Sergeant Polonius is taking notes behind a curtain; the Ghost appears. When the Sergeant makes a grab at this mysterious figure he is mortally wounded. It is obvious that the Ghost must be the murderer for whom they are looking.

But who can it be? Not the Queen (present), not Ophelia (too weak to deliver such a blow); Laertes is in England, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern provide each other's alibis. Hamlet has shrewd suspicions, but as yet can prove nothing, and plays possum till the arrival of Inspector Fortinbras.

When the Inspector seems to be getting on the track, Hamlet unmasks the murderer. Horatio! His honesty had been overdone from the beginning (plenty of clues there). It was he who "planted" the Ghost on the ramparts and who afterwards assumed the part whenever it was needed. Motive? Iago's. Iago was his favourite character in fiction. Having begun by destroying Hamlet's father and uncle, he would have ended with Hamlet himself on the day of his coronation. We need not be too sorry for him as he is led away. One advantage of rewriting *Hamlet* as a detective story is that it clears up the drama psychologically; and Hamlet himself remains to sulk and sleuth another day.

Last Words of Animals

The Fly: A sticky end.

The Crab: Boil me, shell me, shred me, pound me to a paste, serve me with lettuce and mayonnaise; you cannot break my spirit.

The Dog: Oh, Master! . . . Will there be lamp-posts in Heaven?

End of Old School Tie?

Join the *sans-cravates*; save a coupon and be in the forefront of the battle for Dress Reform and a saner world. C. E. M. Joad says, "This suits me."

ROUGH GALLEY

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"The Taming of the Shrew," at Raynes Park County School

Having heard of the remarkable performances of Shakespeare given within the last five years by the boys of Raynes Park County School, one was delighted to have the opportunity of seeing them play *The Taming of the Shrew* last Saturday. This play is, one imagines, nobody's favourite. It is singularly lacking in poetry (it must be one of the very few without a single "quotation"?) and the whip-cracking, knock-about, break-your-spirit jokes disquiet the ear with up-to-date overtones, and don't seem altogether good fun. This performance, however, was given with so much dash and charm and high spirits that the punches fell as harmlessly as in a fairy story or an early custard-throwing film, and the play preserved from first to last a crude innocence which was both engaging and reassuring. The school has a Shakespearean producer of the first class, and among its pupils a body of highly disciplined and intelligent actors. Petruchio carried off his Nazi-hero temperament with irresistible bravado and attractiveness. He was superb; and so was Katharine, whose edge of outraged dignity and quivering nervous desperation came almost, but not quite, too near the knuckle for comfort. She is the only entirely sympathetic character in the play—unless one includes that mysterious lonely figure, the Pedant of Mantua. In the second half of the performance, when practically everybody is disguised as somebody else and speaking at cross-purposes, one willingly suspended boredom and intellectual effort, and gave oneself up to the pleasure of watching the beauty of the fluid groupings, and the extreme prettiness, simplicity and ingenuity of the sets. In this production everything was subordinated to speed and vitality, which is, of course, right in a play where all depends on a rattling pace, and where there are no memorable passages to be lingered over. One hopes that the only criticism to be made—that some of the actors gabbled a bit here and there, and blurred their lines to the point of occasional inaudibility—is a fault conditioned by their material this year, and not an intrinsic one. Their *Twelfth Night*, their *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, must have been even more interesting, and next year we may look forward to a performance of *Henry IV, Part I*.

"Rise Above It," at the Comedy

Here we have a good, ribald, and jolly little revue. But the exciting point is that in it, throughout it, beneath it, and above it simultaneously appear the two Hermiones, Miss Baddeley and Miss Gingold. Each star in her course has led many a witty little revue. But coalition, you would have said, must be dangerous if not impossible. Something positively chemical must surely happen if Miss Gingold's satirical acid came within fizzling distance of Miss Baddeley's alkaline mischievousness. Explosion, for which we half-hoped, has been averted by the process, simple in theory but difficult in practice, of hardly ever letting them meet. If only they would meet more often! They share one scathing sketch as two old ladies of to-day trying on innumerable, unsuitable hats in order to dispel war-gloom. Bitter compliments are bandied. It is Maughamesque. It ought to last an hour. The two Hermiones play together nowhere else. Each concentrates, in other places, on her own familiar but inventive brand of deflating, debunking and fun-poking. The Baddeley leer and the Gingold inflexion are at their wickedest. Other people contribute indefatigably, but, as it were, in the background. There you may observe Mr. Walter Crisham dancing like anything, Miss Carole Lynne looking nice, and Mr. Henry Kendall adding a helpful chuckle. But it is the two ladies in the foreground, of course, who matter. And at the end, acknowledging our applause, there are two Hermiones together again, nearly aware of each other's triumph, almost hand in hand. "After you!" "No, after *you!*" They exchange a sweet glare, studied courtesies. It is a subtly delicious spectacle.

Cambridge Theatre Concerts

During the last month the Cambridge Theatre have given a series of Thursday evening concerts remarkable for their excellence both in performance and in choice of programme. At the first two concerts, on May 22nd and 29th, the Jacques orchestra, conducted by Dr. Reginald Jacques and Albert Heinig, played among other pieces, two of Mozart's loveliest pianoforte concertos (K503 and 595), a rare and delightful Chaconne of Purcell, and a Divertimento for Strings by Bartok, not apparently heard before in England. The third concert, on June 5th, included Mozart's Piano Trio in B major (564), String Quartet No. 2 by Lennox Berkeley, eight short pieces for piano by Bartok, and the Schubert Quartet "Death and the Maiden." Once again the programme had been skilfully arranged—the two modern works coming in the middle—and the playing by the Stratton String Quartet, with Walter Süsskind as pianist, was of a high quality. Lennox Berkeley's String Quartet, which had its first performance at this concert, is intelligent closely woven music, with more sensuousness than composers usually allow themselves to-day. The Bartok piano pieces following it seemed by comparison merely ingenious and dry. This week's Thursday evening is filled by a Chopin recital by Pouishnoff. The next concert will be given the week after next (June 26th), and details of the programme will be announced later. We urge everyone who can do so to pay a visit to these Cambridge Theatre concerts, which deserve a larger support than they are getting. They start at 6 p.m. and are over by about 7.45.

THE COMING WEEK

SUNDAY, June 15th—

C. E. M. Joad: "Education in the New World," Conway Hall, 11.

K. B. Smellie: "Social Philosophy—Aristocracy," 17 Manchester Street, W.1, 11.

MONDAY, June 16th—

Fabian International Affairs Group Snack Lunch, R. W. G. Mackay: "Spotlight on America," 12 Gt. Newport Street, W.C.2, 1.

TUESDAY, June 17th—

G. Clutton-Brock: "London in Wartime," Housing Centre, 13 Suffolk Street, S.W.1, 1.

Piano and Violin Recital, Czechoslovak Institute, 18 Grosvenor Place, S.W.1, 5.30.

WEDNESDAY, June 18th—

Edward Stirling and Margaret Vaughan: "Une Heure de Théâtre," Institut Français, 5.30.

His Grace the Lord Archbishop of York: "Education and Peace," Birkbeck College, 6. Admission free by ticket to be obtained in advance.

Harold Laski: "Post-War Reconstruction—the Socialist Contribution." Chairman, the Rt. Hon. Herbert Morrison, Conway Hall, 7.

THURSDAY, June 19th—

Dr. N. Pevsner: "Paris and London in the Nineteenth Century—Planning and Chaos," Courtauld Institute, 1.15.

Recital by Norbert Brainin (violin), Austrian Centre, 126 Westbourne Terrace, W.2, 7.30.

FRIDAY, June 20th—

Prof. H. H. Price: "The Nature of the Self," 14 Gordon Square, W.C.1, 5.

John Parker: "Turkey and a Federal Europe," Friends House, 7.15. Admission 1s.

Correspondence

UNDER WHAT FLAG?

SIR,—The letters published until now under the heading "Under What Flag" induce me, as a Sudeten German, to say the following:

After the outbreak of the war those Czechoslovaks of German nationality who live in England as refugees from Nazi oppression, declared to be willing to fight together with the Czechs and Slovaks for the liberation of their home-country from Hitler enslavement and for the restoration of a free democratic Czechoslovak republic within the pre-Munich frontiers. It was taken for granted that the future living together of Czechs, Slovaks and Germans in this historical territory would be stipulated by means of agreements. At the time when the Czech National Committee existed in Paris all endeavours for such agreements were in vain. After the collapse of France, when the Czech Provisional Government in London had been recognised, those efforts were continued. They have met with no success.

That not only many Czech and Slovak, but especially also Sudeten German emigrants have no faith in the majority of the members of this Government results, first of all, from the past of many of those members. This is why there is no Sudeten German representative either in the Provisional Government or in the State Council.

The conditions in the Czechoslovak army reflect the attitude of the persons responsible for them. The fact of national, political and religious discrimination can be proved by manifold material.

Does it not go without saying, and is it not clear to every honest, democratic person, that men who, sticking to their democratic conviction, fled from Hitler to this country and who are willing to fight for their ideas, ask for being enlisted in the British Army? They who have caused this situation are to blame for these facts. The Sudeten Germans are in the position to prove that they never lacked goodwill, honest readiness of coming to an understanding, and the wish for collaboration.

This for the sake of truth.

A SUDETEN GERMAN LIBERAL

SIR,—I am afraid the discussion which is going on as to whether Czechoslovak courts should be set up in this country in order to compel Czechoslovak nationals to join the Czechoslovak armed forces tends rather to confuse the issue than to clear it up. The position of a Czechoslovak national in this country appears to be the following:

(1) He can join the Czechoslovak armed forces. By doing this he is taking not just the ordinary risk of a combatant, but the quite extraordinary additional risk of being thrown into a concentration camp, should the Germans get hold of him, and of dragging his relatives into the same fate, if there are any relatives living in enemy-occupied country. A Czechoslovak refugee who is not willing to accept this risk is acting far less immorally than those who wish to enforce upon him a gamble, where not only his body but also his soul, and often something that does not belong to him, i.e., body and soul of his relatives, are at stake.

(2) He can join the Pioneer Corps. If it is understood that units of this corps recruited from refugees won't be sent abroad, or at least not into zones where they are exposed to the danger of being captured by the enemy, every Czech refugee is morally bound to join this corps, provided that—

(*a*) he is still idle;

(*b*) he is a skilled worker or an unskilled one having no qualification for any other work than that of a labourer.

(3) He can take up a job on the "home-front."

There is, therefore, ample scope for Czech refugees and the Czechoslovak Provisional Government to join the fight against Hitlerism in perfect harmony. If there are still some Czechoslovak refugees idle, they should be asked—without pressure and blackmail—how they wish to co-operate, and if any of them refuse all co-operation, the British Government has sufficient power to deal with them without bestowing constitutional powers over Czechoslovak nationals upon the "Provisional Czechoslovak Government," which is not a constitutionally formed government. No government, claiming to be a democratic one, has ever before assumed and exercised constitutional powers in this way. Why should just "Champions of Democracy," the British Government, and Dr. Benes waste their energies in setting up such an unnecessary and unwise precedent?

A PLAIN CZECH

THE CASE OF THE SERGEANT PILOT

SIR,—Like Mr. J. L. Hodson's son, I, too, am a Sergeant Pilot in the R.A.F.

Although I agree with Mr. Hodson that the system of selecting pupils for commissioned rank before they have been on operational service could be improved, I do not accept his suggestions that the authorities who make the choice are influenced by any other considerations than the merit of the candidate.

Mr. Hodson says, for example, that "it would be as impossible for a son of a peer to become a sergeant as for the son of a costermonger to become an officer."

But I could introduce him to several Old Etonian sergeants as well as to officers whose fathers are stevedores and waiters.

Moreover, neither at my bomber school in the Midlands nor at my brother's fighter school in Scotland were the potential officers segregated to the officers' mess in the way that Mr. Hodson describes. They received exactly the same treatment as the rest of us until we left the station.

The commissions were awarded on the recommendations of flying instructors, who can tell from long experience how useful an operational pilot his pupil will make, and from the results of the "wings" examination on ground subjects.

Mr. Hodson may protest against the principle of selecting certain pilots as officers and others as sergeants, but very few airmen would subscribe to his opinion that such selection was not both fair and democratic.

W. M. MASON

EDUCATION AND PROPAGANDA

SIR,—Whilst serving abroad I have been lucky to receive the *N.S. & N.* My copy passes from hand to hand and is eagerly awaited by all. We always find it stimulating and salutary.

Since reading W. E. Williams' article on the A.E.C., I have wanted, through your columns, to acquaint him with the following experience and to ask him how he reconciles it with his statement "there is not a penn'orth of propaganda in the Army Education Scheme."

We were paraded one evening to hear a Major of the A.E.C. on certain aspects of the war. The lecture opened with an eloquent appeal on behalf of the War Savings Movement, and then our outlook on the world was adjusted by the following "facts": (1) That the only good German is a dead one; (2) that 80 per cent. of Russia's population can neither read nor write; (3) that native tradesmen trust and love Englishmen to such an extent that unlimited credit is given (this applies to no other nationality); (4) that Englishmen are born greatly superior to any other race; (5) that we are really fighting the German people (the Hun), whom we must completely destroy; (6) that Left-wing people are "lower than a snakes-belly"; (7) that war-aims talk is sheer bunk.

I feel the A.E.C. could serve the really important function of democratic instruction which would result in an intelligent appreciation of the values of equality, tolerance, decency and justice, for which we are fighting. But crude lectures of the above type only arouse contemptuous amusement in the educated, whilst others receive a grossly distorted outlook which will adversely affect the chances of a national peace. I do not think that one can expect anything from the A.E.C. The whole army organisation is heavily weighted against democratic values —you will not find decency, justice or tolerance there. The officers I've known are anti-Socialist before they are anti-Nazi.

MERELY A PRIVATE

FAMILY ALLOWANCES

SIR,—As a Socialist I hesitate to criticise any scheme which has as its object a more equitable distribution of the nation's wealth, but I'm sure many must feel doubts about the proposed institution of family allowances. In your article (31.5.41) the objections you attribute to certain Trade Unionists are wholly of a sectarian or expedient character, but surely there are wider grounds than these for debate? A good case can be made out for existing indirect alleviations. Indeed, I see no objection to widening the scope of those measures which benefit the child directly, without parental intervention. But cash payment to the parent is, I submit, a very different matter. A grant would be made on the dubious assumption that the child would derive the benefit. I say "dubious" because indiscriminate breeding is almost the prerogative of the irresponsible poor.

On the wider issue, as to whether an increasing population is desirable in the national interest, your article makes no comment. This must surely be taken into account, else why give parents preferential treatment and ignore other members of the community saddled with the expense of, say, a voracious appetite or a sterile mistress?

In any case, if progenitive ability is to be subsidised, I suggest that the less potent (or more wary) are justified in demanding the strictest safeguards and limitations, unless we view with equanimity a possible future state in which the present privileged class is replaced by an oligarchy of virile sires, each with a town house (for recuperative purposes), and a stud farm in the country.

WORKER

INDIA STUDENTS

SIR,—May we draw the attention of your readers to a recent occurrence in India which we believe to be of general as well as local interest? We refer to the trial of seven Indian students, one of whom is well remembered in British student circles.

Mohan Kumaramangalam was a student in Cambridge until 1939, and was a respected member of the University. Among other distinctions he was President of the Union in the Lent Term, 1939, President of the Federation of Indian Students, and a member of the delegation of British students to Spain. He played a leading part in many democratic movements, and shared in the fight to prevent war and against Fascism.

He returned to India last year, and began work in the student movement there. In December he was chairman of a student conference in Mangalore Madras Province, when police entered the room and fired on the meeting. Kumaramangalam and some others escaped, but were captured a few days later and put in prison. With six others, Kumaramangalam was put on trial, charged with being party to a criminal conspiracy and a member of an unlawful association. An unsuccessful attempt was made to hold the trial in private, the police averring that witnesses would be reading documents "containing Communistic ideas which might influence the public." We do not yet know how the trial resulted.

It seems from this instance that Indian student organisations are suffering at the hands of the authorities in the same way as the other political organisations. In registering our protest against this, we cannot fail to relate this case to the general background of the political situation in India, where men working for the freedom and independence of their country are imprisoned by the British authorities. Individual examples give an indication of the real position in India which hardly correspond with the treatment or lack of treatment of the matter in the press of this country.

RAYMOND WILLIAMS
(Chairman of Debates, Union Society)
J. MAYNARD SMITH, Cambridge
(Ex-Chairman of Debates).

COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES

SIR,—We understand that at the Labour Party Conference Mr. A. M. Wall stated that this Council was almost entirely under Communist control.

Mr. Wall has been misinformed about this matter, and we take this opportunity of categorically denying the statement which he made. This organisation is not, and never has been, under Communist control, and so long as we are associated with it it will not be under that or any other political domination.

HENRY W. NEVINSON (President)
E. M. FORSTER (Ex-President and Vice-President)
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Thanks, Mr. Lyttelton!

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

PROFESSOR E. M. BUTLER, in her critical biography, *Rainer Maria Rilke* (Cambridge, 21*s*.), has no difficulty in showing that, in spite of the philosophical pretensions of his later poetry, Rilke's preoccupations and vision were essentially aesthetic.

By his inheritance of the *fin-de-siècle* attitude and the modifications of it forced upon a central European, in particular, between 1914 and 1924, Rilke presents an artistic case-history of permanent importance. The stages of his life touch the nodes of significant development during the period: an unhappy childhood in Prague, torn between a shy, conventional father and an "artistic," silly-selfish mother who exploited her son's feelings; a still more wretched adolescence in a military academy; then a breakaway, resulting in a Russian *Sturmd und Drang* period; then an extraordinary interlude in the artist's colony at Worpswede, where the poet evolved his cult of virginity, an obscure technique of Platonic friendship, and his characteristic symbolism of the rose. This period resulted in a curiously abortive marriage, a translation to Paris and the friendship of Rodin (an all-important influence). Then come the years of uneasy wandering, punctuated by illustrious and advantageous friendships; then the war and Switzerland, the gradual withdrawal into invisibility at Muzot, and at last the long-wished-for death.

This absorbing fable illustrates, I think primarily, the effect which such a childhood and youth as Rilke's must have in forcing the unconscious uncomfortably near the surface; Rilke preserved both his poetic faculty and essential sanity, but at a cost which is an object-lesson, as painful as Coleridge, in elaborate subterfuge. "Rilke was phenomenally susceptible to aesthetic influences, to atmosphere, to latitude, to landscapes, to the past, to spiritual forces . . . but not to human beings as such." "He had skipped the chapter of mankind," as he himself expressed it; for he never succeeded in reaching that final phase, of responsibility for his own and others' lives. This failure implied an ultimately meaningless marriage and an endless succession of equivocal friendships; for what Rilke always needed was not a wife or a mistress, but a mother. Affection and solicitude he could and did give in return, but he was utterly incapable of the wholemeal bread of love. Professor Butler is necessarily rather vague about the sexual element in Rilke's relations with women, and she does not deduce (as I should) obscure repressions as the cause of the melancholia from which he suffered during the critical years 1910–14, critical because from them emerged the last and greatest phase of his poetry. But of even greater interest is the complicated rondo-form into which Rilke's compulsive alarm forced all his friendships. From the mysterious Lou Andreas-Salomé, the friend of Nietzsche, through the Worpswede sisterhood and Rodin, down to Princess Marie of Thurn and Taxis and Frau Wunderly-Volkart, the tale is essentially the same, and its guiding thread is a lack of "fundamental human delicacy"—a lack made the more glaring by the extreme superficial delicacy for which Rilke was always so conspicuous. This fault, although Professor Butler does not say so, is a typically Teutonic one, for, with very few exceptions, Germans tend to understand friendship as the spiritual enslavement of others. They invade people's lives, impose their own standard of feeling—giving confidences where none were asked, extorting them willy-nilly in return, and betraying them with levity—abuse the emotional and material resources they find, and then, if objection is at last taken to this stupefying behaviour, show themselves hurt and affronted and accuse those on whom they have battened of being untrue friends. Such, in outline, is the history of Rilke's relationship to Rodin, who, with Latin *savoir faire*, resisted the siege; Germans and Austrians, who did not resist, got at once more and less out of Rilke—less "humble" admiration, but more of those self-revelatory outpourings which they evidently so much enjoyed. For one of the concomitants of this man's inaptness for direct human contacts was his passion for letter-writing, which in his case was not so much a means of bridging distance as of preserving it. Like the curious, composite angels of the *Elegies*, his letters were "a strong arm, warding off"; hence the laborious mystification which they so frequently display, and their dreadful volubility, as of a monologue spoken through a mask.

Yet, if he was consistently ruthless in his determination to keep all friends at a distance where their demands were reduced to what he felt able to supply, his resolve that they should administer to his own peculiar needs was no less imperious. "So few people ever wanted to get rid of Rilke; it was so often the other way round that his capacity for clinging too close was rarely in evidence." It is now, however, fairly apparent. "Alas," he wailed, as early as 1904, "that I have no family country-seat; nowhere in the whole world a room of my own with a few old things and a window opening on to great trees." All very well; but what Rilke really wanted, and pursued with a terribly gentle relentlessness, was a large and beautiful house, isolated by a magnificent park, perfectly run—free of cost to himself—by a sufficiency of domestics, and belonging to a sympathetic, intellectual woman of the highest nobility, who would make all arrangements for Rilke's comfort and then remove herself to a safe distance, leaving the poet in possession for an indefinite period, during which an unending stream of beautiful, fascinating, but strangely irrelevant, letters would pour across the interval. One thinks irresistibly of Tchaikovsky and Nadejda von Meck. . . . But even this was not all. Having acquired the castle, the servants and the complacent hostess, Rilke liked to sit down and write equally long letters to his other friends complaining of loneliness and discomfort, abusing the people, the scenery, etc., and protesting that *any* place else in the world would, at that particular moment, have suited him better. This was to ask of people more than can be expected; nevertheless, it is evidence of Rilke's extraordinary, wheedling tenacity that he did, in fact, succeed in living nearly half his life, if not more, in conditions of comfort, at other people's expense.

"Reality is something distant which comes infinitely slowly to those who have the power to wait," said Rilke, during his Russian period. Having failed to find reality through life, he proceeded to seek it first in works of visual art—the exquisitely subtle *Neue Gedichte* were the result of this phase—and then, for one mad moment, in the onset of the Great War. Let me not be misunderstood: Rilke was a very great writer and a man of extremely delicate health, and it is to the honour of Austria that she kept him out of the war. But, that being so, he should have had taste and self-knowledge enough not to sound a clarion call to arms; as it is, those windy and unreal poems are far more irresponsible even than d'Annunzio's hysterical incitements; for the operatic Italian did at least know what action was and was prepared to take it, whereas Rilke's attitude and behaviour, once the war got going, provokes the comment that in cases like this even poets should practise what they preach. Even worse is it to underrate humanity as Rilke—inevitably—did during the war ("The world has fallen into the hands of men," he groaned); but in that very fact lies the explanation of his attitude, if not its excuse. Rilke's attitude to the war was due to that lack of proportion—that defective sense of the actual—which led Stendhal to assert that on a day-dreaming German the fall of a leaf and the fall of an empire have the same effect.

Finding the reality displayed by war intolerable, Rilke sought it finally in a poetry of Death—that "personal" death he had imbibed as a young man from the overwrought, consumptive beauty of Jacobsen's novels, and the desire of which underlies everything he wrote, from the early stories to *Malte Laurids Brigge* and the *Elegies*. Faced at every turn by the importunacy of the material world, he seized and stuffed it by handfuls into his poetry, so as to be alone with its negation. But like a *Doppelgänger* it rose again and again before him in the guise of more and more women, and young enthusiastic poets, and lakes and towers and trees, and in his constant symbol of the rose, whose hundred eyelids were folded over "no-one's sleep"—that central void in which ached and throbbed his longing for death. And not merely his own death, but that of the entire visible world. Unable to accept the latter, he "offered . . . to spiritualise it out of existence, to make it actually what it already practically was for him, invisible and unearthly." Those months spent alone in the frozen solitude of the little old castle, when the *Elegies* were at last completed in a final frenzy of intellectual passion, are of as deep a symbolical significance as any in the lives of poets, and thus, I think, of unique interest in the history of the human spirit. The magnitude of the effort involved is only comparable to some tremendous act of faith; for when Rilke emerged from his lonely struggle with the angels he had created, the magical work of transformation was at last accomplished: the world and its objects, the men and women who had succoured and tormented him—all had disappeared for ever, and in their stead had arisen, as from the flames of a *Götterdämmerung*, a world of essences which moved with the serene heroic grace, the liberated universality, of a new music. Musical, too, the way in which the entire myth is not stated until the Last Elegy, like a theme that is completely revealed only in its final permutation.

Rilke's angels deserve special attention. Professor Butler goes fully into the question of their heterogeneous origins. These include Nietzsche's Superman, and have but a feeble link with the Christian myth, for Rilke was, on the whole, and in spite of his endless search for God, antagonistic to the doctrines of Resurrection and Mediation, and at one moment (1922) even went so far as to advocate a phallic religion on Lawrentian lines. The reasons for this incongruous excursion are probably not further to seek than in the case of Lawrence, with whom Rilke had a great deal in common, both as man and poet. I wish Professor Butler had thought it worth while to pursue this comparison, for such a course would, among other things, have thrown light on the creation of those sexless beings, "protagonists in a drama which had gradually shifted from the human to the superhuman plane." In other words, Rilke had at last succeeded in finding a (to him) adequate substitute for men and women—beings in converse with whom he was relieved of the travail of mutual responsibility; whom he could fear, respect, *love*. And here Professor Butler seems to me guilty of a piece of confusion, for on one page (337) she speaks of Rilke as stating that sorrow and love should be left to the angels to utter, and on the next asserts that, because the world is one of sorrow, Rilke considered it "outside the angels' ken." Both cannot be true.

Astonishing as the *Elegies* are as poetry, I agree that they produce "an unquiet feeling of treacherous depth." Rilke's attempt to give his aesthetic images the universal validity of

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a metaphysical system, in obedience to the *Zeitgeist* and his own spiritual needs, resulted, in the case of the *Elegies* at least, in poetry which can be interpreted in a variety of ways—not to speak of the enormous and pretentious prose glosses with which he gladly furnished anyone who asked for an explanation of his poetry. This fault again must be attributed to the hard core of Teutonism which not even years of Paris and Rodin and Valéry were able to eradicate. " Spiritual arrogance, intellectual confusion," says Professor Butler severely ; and I for one feel no disposition to contradict her.

So I should not be surprised if future generations, while giving the *Duinese Elegies* their high due, were to prefer the posthumous fragments, at least some of the *Neue Gedichte*, and, above all, the splendid *Sonnets to Orpheus*—perhaps the most magical body of verse produced in this century. Here, indeed, the poet succeeded in " translating things he had loved and studied in the past from the world of art into the world of myths, where they lead a double life, have a dual personality and inhabit two different spheres, each of which is an aspect of the other and both of them subject to Orpheus, the poet-god." Here, too, Rilke's rose found its ultimate justification and true being—in its own beauty and the power of the spell it could exercise through form and colour and scent. Unfolded at last, releasing death, the symbol had become the thing itself.

If I have concentrated here mainly on Rilke the man, that is because this aspect of him has up to now been largely misconceived, and because Professor Butler seems to me the first of the many writers on Rilke who has examined his personality with an eye unclouded by passionate feeling. Her most able and sensitive study may in future receive confirmation from letters still unpublished, but it will hardly be disturbed by them. For this reason alone her book would be of capital importance ; but when it comes to commenting on the poet's work, the sustained brilliance of her exposition would be equally difficult to over-estimate. Most laudably, she has translated all quotations (or made use of existing translations). This will help readers who have no German to an understanding of the poet's ideas ; but I fear it will scarcely make converts to his poetry, for Rilke's peculiar utterance, with its grammatical subtleties and its hushed eloquence—as of someone whispering down a speaking tube, surprising and seductive as the serpent's voice to Eve—lies as uneasy in English as, say, Hopkins would in German. EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

CHAPS

I Am Persuaded. By JULIAN DUGUID. *Cape.* 10s. 6d.

I'd Live the Same Life Over. By PHILIP LINDSAY. *Hutchinson.* 18s.

Mad Dogs and Englishmen. By ERICK BERRY. *Michael Joseph.* 10s. 6d.

Congo Doctor. By W. E. DAVIS. *Robert Hale.* 12s. 6d.

I Was One of Them. By ZYGMUNT LITYNSKI. Trans. by ANNA MCLAREN. *Cape.* 10s. 6d.

The most original of these books is Mr. Duguid's. It is a lively piece of journalism intended as spiritual autobiography, an account of his search for God, and reading like a piece of spiritual publicity. I mean simply that Mr. Duguid is a candid egotist who has, it is true, his moments of genuine humility, but whose main eye is for theatrical effects. His choice of words is indicative. He goes at once for the extreme and the emphatic, as if he had to lash himself along the road to faith. Here he is attacking the academic critics of religion : a don " unless *inhumanly* detached, almost *monstrously* humble and broad-visioned, tends to see *every* problem in the *glare* of his own speciality." If this is Mr. Duguid's way with dons, the reader may imagine Mr. Duguid establishing the existence of God or the probability of life after death. The " indomitable," the " immaculate," " the spectacularly risky," the " gigantic " frisk about in the spotlight.

The connoisseur of modern religions will find in this book a typical *salade de saison.* Mr. Duguid's search for faith drives him to take a little of everything. Ouspensky, Steiner, telepathy, psychic research, mesmerism, a touch of Buchman, spiritual healing by anointment, Coué-ism, electro-magnetism, are added to the plain Christian background. Sensibility is not Mr. Duguid's strong point ; he requires a religion that will " work." It all looks rather like a return to God via Maskelyne and Devant. Contact with science has led to a sort of neo-magical period in religious belief which, to the sociologist, must seem clear evidence of social disintegration. On religious morality Mr. Duguid has little to say. He is chiefly interested, as far as I can gather, in the mechanism and the rewards of the religious impulse, and here he seems to be trying to have it both ways. Since Mr. Duguid is an honest but confused, tentative writer, full of analogy, it is hard to put this clearly, but the example of one of his experiments may be quoted. Mr. Duguid invented a device called The Helper, or Genii, who was to release the riches of the unconscious. When Mr. Duguid went to bed at night he called The Helper and ordered him to provide the plot, characters and narrative of a story by nine o'clock the next morning. It worked. The Helper was inclined to be late, but he did do his stuff. Exalted and writing as if to dictation, Mr. Duguid produced twelve stories in this fashion. Then, calming down, he read them. They were, he honestly admits, tripe. The Helper was dull.

To serious religious natures withdrawn in the dignity of tradition, to those whose religion stands untouched by questions of truth and error, and is the indispensable fable of the human tragedy, Mr. Duguid's bustling, anecdotal quest will seem vulgar and eclectic. But if the manner is tiresome, the matter is a representative compendium of the elements which the heterodox religions of to-day seem to have in common.

Mr. Philip Lindsay belongs to a family distinguished in Australian letters and who fought the Australian bourgeois with a Bohemianism which seems to have lived on longer in Sydney than it did here. The ambition of each member of the family was to get out of Australia as soon as possible and to come to London ; but if this was pleasanter for their lives, it is bad for autobiography. The best of *I'd Live the Same Life Over* is the Australian chapters. London is just a string of drinks, parties and Christian names. Sydney's Bohemia was enlivened by the " larrikins " or gangs of adolescent toughs who stood at street corners insulting girls, brawling and living by a grotesque code of honour, until they were put in the shade by the rise of the gangster. On this rowdy, seamy, unrespectable Australia Mr. Lindsay is instructive. He is a cheerful, frank and sentimental writer, and the peculiar relationships of his family are well described.

Mad Dogs and Englishmen and *Congo Doctor* are both accounts of years spent in Africa. The first is by an American lady who married a district commissioner in Nigeria, and she gives an unconventional picture of their life of perpetual safari. What an Englishwoman would either not see or would take for granted Mrs. Berry puts down, and the familiar West African picture is drawn afresh. Dr. Davis was a missionary doctor in the Belgian Congo, which he regards with surprising nostalgia and sentiment. Oh, for the little tin house at Wema, the picnics and even the bicycle rides over the perilous saplings which the natives spread over the swamps! Oh, for the jungle journeys with his wife while the native litter-bearers improvised their song:

> When we started out this morning mama was not heavier than my little finger.
> Oh–h–h– o–oh!
> But now she's grown and grown until we can hardly carry her at all.

A good deal of the book is about journeys, and the medical horrors are not over-done. Dr. Davis came across no cases of appendicitis, gall stones, typhoid, cancer, cholera, typhus or plague; but tuberculosis was a new and increasing disease. This is a mild, rather well-written book, with that matter-of-fact mind behind it which so many Americans take with them when they go abroad. They come into intimate and sympathetic touch with native populations, and yet, fundamentally, seem quite uninterested in them. The absence of anthropological information in this book is typical and curious.

At the present moment it is almost intolerable to read about the first year of this war and the sinister muddle of Anglo-French policy. For those who can take it, Mr. Zygmunt Litynski's critical remarks on the Polish campaign, the narrative of his adventures in the Polish Brigade at Narvik, and the story of his flight across France and Spain after the collapse of France, make lively reading. The author and translator must be congratulated especially on an unusually clean, sound and intelligible handling of military movements. Mr. Litynski was convinced, when he dealt with the stony Norwegians, that they had no use for their friends or their enemies, and regarded the campaign which rolled horrifying echoes down the fjords with taciturn indifference. Back in France, Mr. Litynski arrived in time for the fall and made his escape with a party of his compatriots who travelled overnight across country. This is a thrilling story well told. The Gestapo and propaganda services in France were very bad at the beginning, Mr. Litynski says, since the Germans had scattered and exhausted these forces in their conquests. That should be true to-day, as the German machine has to parcel itself out all over Europe. Bad as the Germans were, *we* did no counter-propaganda at all. There were distinct revolutionary possibilities last June, Mr. Litynski says, and we were hardly the side to give a lead in that direction. Instead, it is again this Polish writer's opinion, we greatly over-estimated General de Gaulle's importance in France. In Spain Mr. Litynski found himself among the macabre. Except in the centre of the big cities, the ruins had been left untouched, no reconstruction was being done. The broken telephone wires still hung from the poles, as the Spanish civil war had left them. The beggars had multiplied. Here one saw the results of the triumph of Fascism. The factions were at each other's throats; Spanish incompetence and mañana were restored. The "black legend" had returned. The Germans, one is not surprised to hear, were very, very unpopular.

V. S. PRITCHETT

A GREAT AMERICAN

The Living Thoughts of Jefferson. Selected and Edited by JOHN DEWEY. *Cassell.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

Jefferson remains one of the supreme figures in the liberal tradition, and there is much of what he had to say that has been woven into the permanent fabric of men's thoughts. He is typical of his generation and people in the universality of his interests and in the profound humanism which set the perspective of all his thinking. A statesman hardly less skilled than Franklin Roosevelt in his power to read the public mind, a devoted and able student of science and philosophy, an economist of insight, tolerant, generous, sensitive, no American save Lincoln represents better than he the first epoch of American democracy at its best. There is, indeed, a sense in which it is true to say that all American history is the record of the conflict between the tradition of Jefferson and the tradition of Hamilton; a sense, also, in which the degree of departure from the Jeffersonian tradition is the measure of the abandonment of the purposes for which America was founded.

Professor Dewey has here given us an admirable selection of his thoughts, together with an introduction that is as illuminating as was to be expected from his pen. It reveals a Jefferson with a power of phrase that is always happy, and often memorable. Indeed, it would be worth arguing that Jefferson is one of a dozen Americans from whom could be culled a treasury of aphorisms as pointed and as profound as anything in the literature of France. The outstanding feature of these pages is, I think, Jefferson's grasp of the central truth of all political experience—that expressed by Acton in the famous sentence, "Power always corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." That central truth Jefferson, with a political experience as fundamental as any man has ever enjoyed, made the basis of his defence of democracy. It is built on the realisation that collective wisdom must always control individual authority if the needs of the masses are to be taken into account. No one is good enough to be entrusted with irresponsible power; and without democracy there cannot be that "exact and equal justice" which is the only permanent safeguard, as Jefferson saw, against violent upheaval.

No doubt in many ways Jefferson is of his time. Government is, for him, an evil to be feared, rather than an agent to be invoked. He has little sense of the degree to which

"*This man, with lanthorn, dog, and bush of thorn,
Presenteth Moonshine.*"—A Midsummer Night's Dream.

John Collier
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science and commerce would bind American fortunes inescapably to those of the Old World. He had a larger faith in the power of reason over men than most of us could now share. He did not see that issues like that of centralisation in government depend as much upon the nature of the function to be performed as upon the size of the area involved. But, all in all, he is a towering figure among his contemporaries, and his works have a classic texture. The man who could write that "the generation which begins a revolution rarely completes it. Habituated to passive submission . . . their inexperience, their ignorance and their bigotry make them instruments often, in the hands of the Bonapartes, to defeat their own rights and purposes" had the root of the matter in him.

The publishers have sinned against the light in not providing this volume with either an index or the references to those of Jefferson's works from which the quotations are taken.

HAROLD J. LASKI

ENGLAND UNDER THE BOMBER

Carry on London. By RITCHIE CALDER. *English Universities Press.* 5s.

Britain Under Fire. Foreword by J. B. PRIESTLEY. *Country Life.* 6s.

Astonishing! After reading any chapter of Mr. Ritchie Calder's book about London under *blitzkrieg* one can only repeat, astonishing! He does not go out of his way to relate stories of courage, but that is the first quality that will strike the reader, whether Londoner or not. Heroism and hard work, in these days, go together; everywhere from Mr. Calder's pages there bobs up the everyday hero—rescue-squad man tunnelling through crazy ruins, fireman singing among the dropping bombs, typist going from office to warden's post, the wounded stifling pain so that they shall die quietly. There is no need at the end of the book for Mr. Calder to add a postscript on "morale."

As astonishing, too, is the revelation of people's ability to take things into their own control. When the *blitzkrieg* started thousands claimed their own shelters and moved into Tubes of their own accord. The Government had to "accept the situation." It accepted, but it did not take in hand; the transformation of dangerous and sometimes filthy conditions was brought about by helpers of all kinds and by journalists, including Mr. Calder, who were dubbed defeatist for their pains. The same story is repeated again and again: shelters, front line kitchens, evacuation of hospitals, emergency first-aid—in all of these, organisation began from the "little people" who could not wait for official moves. Mr. Calder comments with some restraint: "Because the human element has never failed the Government, it is a pity that the Government's own schemes should have been imperfect." However, the Government did move eventually and in the right direction.

The reverse to this picture of English men and women helping one another is provided in a chapter called "The Door-Slammers." Many evacuees from East London were refused admittance to middle- and upper-class houses in the country. In some cases the billeting officer would be the first to argue for dumping the poor on the doorsteps of the poor. Providing billets, as Mr. Calder points out, can be a thankless job, without the dramatic compensation of some other kinds of war-work. But even so, this caste behaviour makes disagreeable reading.

Carry On London gives a vivid and well documented account of how a city resists air attack. The author, who has made it his business to be on the spot wherever bombing was heaviest, confines himself here to London, but what he reports of London is true also of Coventry, Plymouth, Bristol and half a dozen other towns. Many journalists have given vivid and somewhat melodramatic pictures of the *extent* of damage, and of the number of people living in shelters, in our worst blitzed towns. Mr. Quentin Reynolds, for example, in *The Wounded Don't Cry*, stated that in September more than 50 per cent. of Londoners were sleeping underground. That figure, on the face of it, is ridiculous. A truer picture is provided by Mr. Calder, whose aim here as elsewhere is to discover facts and not to serve up the hottest story. His figures, it will be noted, refer to the period *after* the early *blitz* had ended.

> On a quiet night in January it was found that only 4 per cent. of the population of the London region were in public shelters. Only a fifth of the available accommodation was being used. In domestic shelters 14 per cent. of the possible occupants were using them. In the London area—the County of London—were 6½ per cent. and 15¾ per cent. Although there was no "blitz," these figures are significant, showing how small a proportion of the population had developed a "shelter-mentality."

Probably no journalist has done more than Mr. Calder in driving home the essential facts, whether shocking or reassuring, of the situation.

Britain Under Fire is a photographic record of bombed England. Beginning with the interior of St. Paul's and the Guildhall Library, it goes on to famous ruined buildings and typical scenes of destruction in London and all the more important provincial cities. In the record of what Mr. J. B. Priestley calls "a great crime and a still greater people," it can only, alas! be regarded as an interim report.

G. W. STONIER

EUROPEAN PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

European Painting and Sculpture. By ERIC NEWTON. *Pelican Books.* 6d.

Mr. Eric Newton has done just what was wanted. He has raised a popular handbook on a foundation of sensitive, scholarly and up-to-date opinion, thus giving us a model Pelican. In a hundred and twenty-five pages he finds room for a series of expositions, arguments and judgments—a few of them wrong-headed, but mostly excellent—from which is made to emerge, I will not say a picture, but an adumbration of his vast subject. Rightly he prefaces his survey with an attempt to state his aesthetic; inevitably he comes to grief. It seems impossible to elaborate an aesthetic theory without coming to grief—*experto credite*. Art, he defines, as "a human conception, made manifest by the use of a medium." So far, well enough: but he goes on to say: "I define good art . . . as a noble (or arresting, or interesting, or valuable) conception made manifest by the skilful use of a medium," and begs the question. He must now define "noble," "arresting," "interesting," "valuable." Tolstoy thought a "valuable" artistic conception was one that led to philanthropy; consequently he lauded the sentimental anecdotists of the nineteenth century and loathed the Impressionists. Philosopher Diderot took much the same line, and extolled Greuze above all painters of his own and the preceding age—especially above such fribbles as Chardin and Watteau. Mr. Newton makes no such mistake. Bating a few lapses, such as await us all, he knows a work of art when he sees one, and knows why it is good. He knows that it is capable of provoking a state of mind precious beyond words. He knows this, and I know this; but people incapable of experiencing the aesthetic emotion cannot be expected to know it. We must all be very sorry for them.

The best advice I can give readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION is to read this book, which costs sixpence. The best way of giving them a foretaste of the author's quality is to quote a few of his sayings. This is an unsatisfactory method only because it is apt to give the impression that the author is smart and superficial. In fact, from beginning to end of this small book one is made to feel that, if Mr. Newton had five hundred pages at his disposal, he could fill them handsomely, without one inch of verbiage or a single platitude. Also I want to indicate a merit for which I am particularly grateful—a happy knack of inventing or refitting words and phrases (e.g. "an eyefull") to express concepts which, constantly in the minds of amateurs and critics, are distressingly difficult to get out.

Here, then, are a few sentences which will give some notion of the way in which the author feels and thinks and of his power of epitomising his thoughts and feelings.

> Page 34. Behind every Western carving of a human figure is the implication of a portrait; behind every Oriental statue is the implication of a mood.
>
> Page 32. Constable takes the utmost pains to be faithful to what his eye sees: the Eastern artist to what his mind knows.
>
> Page 41. This question of "grasp" is not an easy one to explain. It consists largely in the painter's power to ignore the separateness of objects . . .
>
> Page 59. In Greek art Man and God are indistinguishable, for they depend not on their function but on their appearance.
>
> Page 78. They (Sienese figures) have the three-dimensional existence of a balloon but not the weight of a boulder.
>
> Page 81. His (Antonio Pollaiuolo's) was the inquiring scientific spirit of Piero, but not being a poet it was with difficulty that he avoided the pitfall of pedantry.
>
> Page 47. The unthinking eye of an animal.

It goes without saying that I often disagree with Mr. Newton; it would be discreditable to one or other of us did I not. I do not agree with him in regarding Romanesque and Gothic as one continuous movement; to me it seems that somewhere about the year 1220—thirteenth-century glass notwithstanding—art in Northern Europe took a turn for the worse and had to wait for the Renaissance to be put right again. I do not share his slightly patronising attitude to Siena; and certainly I do not agree with him when he says, or rather implies, that Gray's Elegy is vastly superior to the Odes. I think he overrates Pieter Brueghel and Stanley Spencer, and grossly overrates Spencer by comparing him with Brueghel. But I am glad he is not taken in by Caravaggio. In my opinion he ante-dates the beginning of the Dark Ages (pages 60 and 61). Surely we have some idea of "what life was like in Aix-en-Provence or Athens in the fourth century A.D.": not before the sixth or seventh, I should have thought, does that "artistic vacuum occur." I cannot feel that Goya is as great as he makes out.

All these are debatable points on which I happen to differ from the author: it would be pleasant to discuss them over a bottle, and I make no doubt he would give as good as he got. My quarrel with his treatment of the nineteenth century is different. He finds the whole Impressionist movement unsympathetic, he admits; consequently, towards page 109—at least so I fancy—he begins to become bored, and his boredom manifests itself in small yet significant blunders. By confusing, or allowing the printer to confuse, Monet with Manet he makes nonsense of a long and important paragraph (page 112). "Impressionism as a name dates back to 1863": no, if you are bent on exactitude, it dates back to 1874. "Degas's most able follower is the English Sickert." Well, I hate yielding to anyone in my admiration for Sickert, but I suppose there is something to be said for the claims of Lautrec, Bonnard and Vuillard. The fact is, Mr. Newton fails to understand that the French

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nineteenth century was one of the great ages of painting; and in consequence, maybe, falls to flattering the Pre-Raphaelites. To say that Madox Brown's *Work* and Millais's *Autumn Leaves* and *Lorenzo and Isabella* are "original works of art of very high order," and to call "the best of their work" "immortal," strikes me as going a bit far. In a very small book on a very big subject, to devote a whole paragraph to G. F. Watts is going farther. And while I am still out of humour, let me inform Mr. Newton that the members of what he is pleased to call Banning Cocq's "shooting company" were not "gentlemen of Antwerp" (page 19), and his publishers that *Vision and Design* (*vide* Advertisement) is not by Clive Bell. I wish it were.

CLIVE BELL

NOTES ON ARNOLD

The Poetry of Matthew Arnold. A Commentary by C. B. TINKER and H. F. LOWRY. *Oxford Press.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

This book has a misleading title, for it consists of annotations rather than of criticism. It has been prepared as a companion to a new edition of Arnold's complete poems that is due to appear soon. The two American authors commend themselves as scholars alike by the patience with which they have assembled their material and by the discrimination of their comments. They have made excellent use of all the sources available, including hitherto unpublished material, such as the "Yale Manuscript," a volume of rough notes containing first drafts of poems and brief reflections that the poet thought might prove fruitful.

Here are a few instances of this book's usefulness. In the comment upon *Sohrab and Rustum* we are given relevant quotations from *Travels in Bokhara* by Alexander Burnes, including the passage upon which Arnold based the magnificent *coda* about the Oxus. (A note in the Oxford *Arnold* mistakenly suggests that the poët had used a narrative of a voyage to Scinde, by James Burnes.) Touching *The Church at Brou,* the authors quote Edgar Quinet's description of the tombs, which Arnold, with no acknowledgment, turned almost literally into couplets. It ends:

> Quand le vent fait gémir les portes, ils murmurent entre eux: Qu'avez-vous, mon âme, pour soupirer si haut? et quand la pluie creuse le toit sur leurs têtes, ils se disent: Entendez-vous aussi sur votre dais la pluie de l'eternel Amour?

They further point out, what no visitor to Brou can have failed to notice, the extraordinary inaccuracies of Arnold's description. Obviously, he had never seen this lamentable edifice. *Haworth Churchyard,* we are told, is hardly less inaccurate; and one is amused to learn that in reprinting this poem Arnold omitted the apostrophe to Death pleading for Miss Martineau's life: "Turn, O Death, on the vile, Turn on the foolish the stroke Hanging now o'er a head, Active, beneficent, pure." Miss Martineau survived the writing of this poem by twenty-one years, during which Arnold decided that her life and nature were both signally unpleasant!

This book includes a pleasant essay by Sir Francis Wylie on the *Scholar-Gypsy* country. Messrs. Tinker and Lowry offer a suggestion, new at any rate to me, about one reference in *The Scholar-Gypsy*:

> one,
> Who most has suffer'd takes dejectedly
> His seat upon the intellectual throne;
> And all his store of sad experience he
> Lays bare of wretched days.

Arnold asserted, surprisingly, that this was a reference to Goethe's *Dichtung und Warheit.* Others have suggested Carlyle. Messrs. Tinker and Lowry make a case for Tennyson, or for a blend of Tennyson and Goethe. Arnold despised Tennyson as "no great and powerful spirit in any line," but he could not get him out of his head, and *In Memoriam* had been published just before the writing of *The Scholar-Gypsy.* Moreover, Tennyson had succeeded Wordsworth upon "the intellectual throne"—the phrase itself comes from Tennyson's *Palace of Art*—of the Laureateship.

That there is some reason to doubt Arnold's own assertions is suggested by two quotations from a hitherto unpublished letter to Henry Dunn, dated November 12th, 1867:

> I cherish very great sympathy for Senancour. But even transfigured he retains, because I meant him to be true to the reality, an aridity and crudity in his language which savours of the French Revolution and its vehemence of negation and opposition, and which certainly, were I writing for myself directly, would not be mine.
>
> That Christ is alive is language far truer to my own feeling and observation of what is passing in the world, than that Christ is dead.

The language in *Obermann Once More* that he calls crude and arid is actually some of his finest, and, one would have said, most profoundly felt, poetry. Possibly this part of the poem belongs to an earlier period. (He had revisited Grimsel in 1857 "for Obermann's sake.") The letter goes on:

> You, like one or two of the religious newspapers which I have seen, appear to assume that I merely use Empedocles and Obermann as mouthpieces through which to vent my own opinions. This is not so. . . . Traces of an impatience with the language and assumptions of the popular theology of the day may very likely be visible in my work, and I have now, and no doubt had still more then, a sympathy with the figure Empedocles presents to the imagination; but neither then nor now would my creed, if I wished or were able to draw it out in black-and-white, be by any means identical with that contained in the preachment of Empedocles. No critic appears to remark that if Empedocles throws himself into Etna his creed can hardly be meant to be one to live by.

No doubt the poet had been exasperated by his correspondent's assumption that the poems were strictly autobiographical. But one has also the impression that with advancing years Arnold, who had become more conformist, had lost something of his integrity. Or would it be fairer to say that he had forgotten his old feelings, as men, for their greater ease of mind, do forget the vagaries of their youth? In middle life he reverted to type, and the bantering sceptic developed into a son almost worthy of Dr. Arnold.

The disingenuous account that he gave of the Marguerite poems is explicable on this hypothesis. Despite most careful research at Thun, Messrs. Tinker and Lowry have discovered nothing new about this important episode. Their conclusion is worth quoting:

> We believe, then, that the "Switzerland" poems had their inception in certain definite events of the years 1848–1849; that in the course of their creation they were altered and freely idealised according to the mood of the poet. No more than this, the natural process by which poetry comes into being, is perhaps needed to account for the poet's assertion to his daughters that the experience related was imaginary.

This is charitable. But it might be simpler to admit that it was generically impossible for an eminent Victorian to tell his daughters that he had had a serious love affair with a servant who had become a tart.

Other points I have noted in this book are that *Growing Old* (one of Arnold's finest poems) was a retort to *Rabbi Ben Ezra,* which in turn had been a retort to the *Rubaiyat*; that Arnold tried to have *Merope* acted; that the final paragraph of *Dover Beach* (with images taken not from the sea but from Thucydides' account of the battle of Epipolae) was written before the rest of the poem. Finally, the reader's attention must be drawn to the rough draft of *Philomela*:

Company Meeting

DUNLOP RUBBER COMPANY

NET PROFIT OVER £3,000,000—GROUP'S HEAVY TAXATION CHARGE

HOME TRADING WELL MAINTAINED

SUBSTANTIAL ADVANCE IN EXPORT BUSINESS

SIR GEORGE BEHARRELL ON THE ORGANISATION'S STRENGTH

THE forty-second ordinary general meeting of the Dunlop Rubber Company, Ltd., was held on Tuesday, June 10th, at the Café Royal, London.

Sir J. George Beharrell, D.S.O., the chairman of the company, presided.

The Secretary (Mr. Charles Tennyson, C.M.G.) read the notice convening the meeting and the report of the auditors.

The following review of the year's operations by the Chairman was taken as read :—

Following what is now becoming a common practice among companies with large numbers of shareholders, I am circulating this statement with the directors' report and accounts, and it will take the place of my usual speech at the annual general meeting of the company.

Your Board felt that a large proportion of the shareholders would be engaged on work of national importance, which they would not wish to interrupt in order to attend a meeting, and that many might think it contrary to the Government's injunctions against unnecessary travelling if they were to journey to London for the purpose.

For reasons which will occur to all of you, my statement will, of necessity, be much less full than in previous years.

Sir Clive Baillieu's Appointment

First, I would like to refer to the appointment of Sir Clive Baillieu, one of your directors, as Director-General of Munitions Supply in the United States, representing the British Government. His colleagues miss his collaboration and advice in the difficult problems with which present conditions confront them, but you, as well as they, will feel honoured that he has been chosen to take so important a part in the country's war effort.

When I last addressed you the conversion of our national economy from a peace to a war basis was still in a comparatively early stage, but the tendency, as the war went on, for trading conditions to become more and more abnormal was fully foreseen. Since that time the Purchase Tax, the limitation of supplies and control of materials have been brought into effect. In all these circumstances it is very satisfactory that, as you will see from the directors' report and accounts, we have been able to more than maintain in 1940 the good trading results of 1939.

Factories Fully Occupied

Our factories in this country have been fully occupied, many branches of our normal business, in which we expected a heavy decline, including our export trade, having held up remarkably well. Indeed, our export business showed a substantial advance in earnings on the preceding year.

The price of rubber and the percentage of quota releases obtaining throughout the year enabled the Dunlop Malayan Estates Company to show a substantial profit, and in spite of the heavy provision which had to be made for United Kingdom Excess Profits Tax, Dunlop Plantations, Ltd., which, you will remember, owns all the shares in Dunlop Malayan Estates, Ltd., was able to pay a dividend on its Preference shares and to repay the Dunlop Rubber Company part of the amount paid by that company under its guarantee in previous years.

Associated Manufacturing Companies' Results

Our associated manufacturing companies in British overseas territories also showed satisfactory results, though the profits in South Africa were less than in the preceding year. The American Dunlop Company again made a profit, though this was smaller than in 1939.

The Japanese Dunlop Company was able to remit the dividend in respect of the year 1939. The sales turnover of that year was maintained in 1940 and a dividend at the same rate as last year declared, but we do not yet know whether a permit will be granted to remit this.

It is a melancholy thought that the French Dunlop Company, in which your company hold a large interest and which was so important an outpost of British trade on the Continent, has now to be treated as an enemy company, and, of course, I am unable to give you any information regarding its progress and position.

Industry's Contribution to the War Effort

There are certain points in connection with the accounts which I should like to amplify.

The net profit for the year amounted to £3,002,000, compared with £2,853,000 in 1939.

The provision for taxation amounted to £1,742,000 which represents an increase of £715,000 over that for the preceding year. In addition to this, in accordance with the policy decided upon last year, the Board has provided £650,000 towards the 1941-42 income-tax liability.

This does not represent the whole burden that the Dunlop Group of companies has had to bear, as the charge for taxation in the accounts of the subsidiary and sub-subsidiary companies amounted to £1,666,000. The total provision for the year under review amounts, therefore, to £4,058,000, compared with £2,388,000 for the previous year, an increase of £1,670,000. The total provision for 1938 was only £820,000. These figures are not given by way of complaint, but industry's huge contribution to the war effort through taxation has to be stated to ensure its proper appreciation.

This great increase has inevitably made a heavy inroad upon the balance of profits available for distribution. After providing for the Preference dividends the Board decided to recommend a dividend of 8 per cent. on the Ordinary stock and a bonus of 2 per cent., and this dividend and bonus, if approved, will be paid on 21st June.

Substantial Reserves Built Up

For the first time for many years the Board has not been able to make any allocation of available profits to increase the reserves of the company, except the special income-tax reserve towards the succeeding year's liability. It is fortunate that the Board was able to build up substantial reserves in the past, as during the war there seems little possibility of any large undertaking building up further its financial strength. Upon the termination of the war, however, the company may become entitled to a refund of 20 per cent. of the Excess Profits Tax paid, subject to the deduction of income-tax at the rate then in operation.

For the reason given in the directors' report, the Board has transferred to the special reserve against investments in and advances to subsidiary companies the sum of £1,000,000 from the general reserve and £250,000 from the reserve for contingencies. This special reserve now stands at £3,250,000, which sum, in the opinion of the Board, is fully sufficient to provide for all foreseeable contingencies.

The Consolidated Statement

In view of the full information given in the directors' report and accounts, I do not propose to deal with the accounts in further detail.

I would, however, like to call your attention to the consolidated statement of assets and liabilities, which you will find on pages 10 and 11 of the accounts. It was a matter for serious consideration whether or not to continue this during the present abnormal times. Your company was one of the leaders in providing this informative statement, and your Board hope to be able to continue its publication. It is, however, important that its limitations under present conditions should be fully understood.

War Conditions and Organisation

I know you will wish to hear something of the way in which the company's organisation is standing up to war conditions.

In the first place, I should like on your behalf to convey a very special message of thanks to the company's employees of all grades who had throughout the year to contend with unexampled difficulties.

The call for A.R.P. workers has been heavy and has met with a magnificent response. The blackout in factories and offices is very trying.

Much new labour has had to be trained and there has been a large substitution of men by women.

Our staff has been seriously depleted by the demands of the fighting forces, and has had to grapple with a great volume of additional work imposed on it by the vast mass of emergency legislation. All these difficulties have been met with loyalty and cheerfulness.

With the company's co-operation the employees at our various factories are providing funds, generally by deductions from wages, for the assistance of those of them who suffer from air attack.

" Spitfire " Purchased by Employees

The employees at Fort Dunlop organised a collection for the purchase of a " Spitfire," and the money raised, with an additional contribution voted by your Board, was used to purchase, through the Motor Industry Fighter Fund, a fighter aircraft, which has been christened " Pericles," after the Prince of Tyre, whose name is familiar to students of Shakespeare.

Results from the War Savings Scheme, of which I told you last year, improved as the year progressed, and we hope to bring about further improvement.

Over 2,600 Employees in the Forces

Over 2,600 employees of the company are now serving in the fighting and whole-time civil defence forces. A number have been promoted to commissioned rank, some have lost their lives, and I am sure that it will be the wish of members to record a sincere expression of sympathy with the relatives of the fallen.

This is not the place to mention the distinctions which have been awarded to Dunlop employees for gallantry and good service, but an opportunity for doing this will be found later.

I know you will be glad to learn that the Board was able to continue the scheme for making financial allowances to employees called up on active service. Although such arrangements must be related to our resources and subject to adjustment when necessary, the Board consider this scheme to be in the broadest sense in the best interests of the company.

Research and Technical Developments

We have not permitted the war to restrict our research and technical developments ; but, on the contrary, our technical staffs have co-operated with the Services, and when peace returns we shall secure considerable advantage from the experience gained.

You will realise how exceedingly difficult the processes of distribution have become. Such measures as the Purchase Tax, the Limitation of Supplies, and the Prices of Goods Act have provided many complications, and, in addition, new and strange conditions occur in the distributive field from week to week and sometimes from day to day. Fortunately, our sales organisations have adapted themselves admirably to the unusual circumstances, and I believe that their resource is assisting to increase the company's prestige and good will with both trade and public.

The Strength of the Organisation

Our branches in the field have not been free from disturbance, but no occurrence has been allowed seriously to delay the distribution of our products, and this is a significant tribute to the strength of our organisation. Much excellent and courageous work has been done by our staffs in minimising damage to our property and stocks.

In concentrating upon essential work your company is sometimes unable promptly to meet all the requirements of what may be termed the " civilian market," but from all quarters we have received a ready recognition of the circumstances. Here I should like to express upon your behalf the company's keen appreciation of the co-operation afforded by all branches of the many trades with which we are connected.

Our difficulties in the coming year are not likely to be less than in the year that has passed. There is no doubt that the activities of British industry generally will be more and more determined by the conditions resulting from the war and more and more subjected to Government requirements.

I am sure you will all agree that the Board's paramount duty is to preserve the company's assets and liquid position and to keep the organisation at the highest pitch of efficiency. This will not only render possible the utmost service in the national interest during the present emergency, but will also ensure that after the war we shall be able to maintain and advance still further the pre-eminent position of your company.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

Hark ah the nightingale,
The inken throated—
Hast thou not yet, poor bird,
Been help'd by slipping years
At least to half forgetfulness
Of that old pain.
Can change of scene, and night,
And moonlight, & the dew,
And these frail song-stirr'd boughs
Through whose light leaves, & showers
Of blossom'd clusters pale,
Thy voice by gushes comes.
To thy rack'd heart & brain
Afford no balm ?
Dost thou still behold
With terror, from thy tree,
On this fair western lawn,
The unfriendly palace in the Thracian wild ?
Dost thou still peruse
In the white acacia flowers
With hot cheeks & sear'd eyes
The too clear web, & thy dumb sister's shame ?
Dost thou still reach
Thy husband, weak avenger, thro thyself ?

I recommend everyone interested in poetry to compare this with the final form of the poem. I have not quoted the eleven concluding lines, which remained unaltered, but it will be seen that only seven of the lines above subsist in the final version ; and these include all the best ones. Perhaps the cedar is not so happy as the original acacia, because white flowers enrich the impression of moonlight. Otherwise, each change seems to me an improvement. Certainly the substitution of "tawny" for "inky," though ornithologically more inaccurate, is a conspicuous felicity. "Half forgetfulness" and, still more, "change of scene" suggest a not very tactful letter of condolence. The two lines about "the weak avenger" are a disfiguring conceit. In fact, a comparison of the two versions shows the sureness of the poet's taste, and the infinite value of polishing. It was by taking pains that Arnold achieved one of his finest poems. *Philomela* is, I think, the only poem in an irregular metre, except *Dover Beach*, which he brought to entire success. His ear was uncertain, and he was usually happiest when following a track already beaten by Milton, Wordsworth or Keats.

All admirers of Arnold must be grateful to Messrs. Tinker and Lowry for their scholarly work. Though they seldom indulge in purely literary criticism, they add to our understanding of a great poet.

Raymond Mortimer

The Battle of Britain, 1940. By J. M. Spaight, C.B., C.B.E. *Geoffrey Bles.* 10s. 6d.

Mr. Spaight, in this book, has taken a wider sweep than the Air Ministry pamphlet of the same name. He begins immediately after the fall of France, takes in the night attacks on civilian centres of the autumn and winter, and ends with the attempted blockade of this country and the R.A.F. counter-offensive. His book is a record, thoroughly documented from official communiqués and press reports, of the air duel over this country. The record is full, but does not make very interesting reading. A series of (to the layman) not very dissimilar operations, split up into a great number of (to the layman) not very dissimilar actions, presents the writer with a difficult problem, if his account is to be vivid and quiet moving. To the intrinsic interest of the subject Mr. Spaight adds little by his writing. And the kind of "writing up" he employs is only to be deplored. Any self-respecting pilot would shudder at being referred to (more than once, as a Paladin of the Sky. Mr. Masefield brought off the difficult feat of combining technical description with a clean swift narrative in his account of the retreat from Dunkirk. We still await—in spite of the clarity and brevity of the official account—for someone who combines a narrative gift as fine as Mr. Masefield's with a feeling for the air as sympathetic as his for the sea. An opportunity has been lost with the photographs in this book ; they are mostly on the penny paper "human interest" level.

The Stock Exchange Official Year Book 1941. Edited by the Secretary of the Share and Loan Department of the Stock Exchange. *Thos. Skinner and Co.* 70s.

The paper controller is responsible for a slight shrinkage in the number of pages of this year's volume, but to the credit of all concerned the very high standard of production set in previous years has been maintained.

Some of the features, such as special chapters, lists of Brokers, etc., have had to be temporarily abandoned, but substantially all the information usually given is here. A list of emergency addresses of companies and Registrars, etc., is given, and as usual a "stop press" section containing data received too late for insertion in the appropriate sections. The Editor has successfully surmounted even greater difficulties than usual.

Week-end Competitions

No. 593

Set by Doll Tearsheet

A first prize of Two Guineas and a second prize of Half-a-Guinea are offered for the best report of a conversation between a cat and a dog. Entries not to exceed 250 words.

Rules—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, June 23rd.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 590

Set by G. W. Stonier

We offer the usual prizes of two guineas and half a guinea for the best ten definitions from a Prude's Dictionary.

Report by G. W. Stonier

If life were not so short, and war so long, I should be tempted to use this competition as the basis for compiling a Prude's Dictionary. Many competitors are obviously natural lexicographers, with a turn for definition and wit. Those who would contribute largely to the Dictionary would be : Barbara Fletcher, M. Chisholm, J. H., Leslie Johnson, Sir Robert Witt, Allan M. Laing, Lucie Milner, Stephen Bylansen, Pipkin, R. S. Jaffray, D. W. Barker, J. H. A., T. H. Cubitt, and Paul Max. The only criticism I have to make of their efforts is that in some there is a rather narrow insistence on sex ; the attitude of the Prude could be traced out, more subtly, into every field of manners, art, religion, and even politics. Here, before coming to the prize-winners, is a selection of the best.

Adulterer. One who puts foreign bodies in the milk. (Lucie Milnes).

Advance (usually in plural). A bold remark or gesture unfortunately characteristic of the male when in the company of one of the weaker sex. (Leslie Johnson).

Bastard. Offspring of parents neither good nor careful. (T. H. Cubitt).

Bed. A piece of furniture to sleep on. Sometimes misused. (Barbara Fletcher).

Birth. A happy event. (J. H.).

Brassiere. A French modesty-net. (J. H.).

Brothel. A kind of expensive restaurant, mainly patronised by men. (D. W. Barker).

Coition. Amiable co-operation. (T. H. Cubitt).

Companionate Marriage. A test match ; not cricket. (Pte. 6090002).

Courtship. First steps in libertinage ; a meretricious excuse for the public display of affection between the sexes ; the encouragement of concupiscence. (Allan M. Laing).

Eunuch. A Manservant with minor functions in Eastern households. (M. Cassel).

Having Relations. Inviting the 'in-laws round to tea on Sundays. (Paul Max).

Immorality. Something which everything else Leads To if not carefully watched, and sometimes even then—in which case the laugh is on the Watch Committee. As is well known this sort of thing will invariably lead to That Sort of Thing. (Paul Max).

Indecency. A quality everywhere remarkable and nowhere mentionable. (K. M. H.).

Kiss. Noun : a euphemism for the labial interchange of germs. (Pipkin).

Kiss. Verb : to caress ; to touch with the lips, as in taking an oath in a court of law. (J. H.).

Lap. A good place for cats. (Barbara Fletcher).

Maiden. (1) A horse that has not won a race. (2) An unmarried lady (see Queen Elizabeth). (Lucie Milnes).

Marriage. A regrettable necessity ; a legalised agreement to put the continuance of the human race before modesty ; an improvement on pyromania (St. Paul). (Allan M. Laing).

One Over the Eight. Term felicitously applied to the small man in the 'Varsity boat. (J. J. H. Salter).

Pregnant. (Med.) In a pre-parturitional condition. Usu. fig. as, The virgin is p. May be used literally, to be p. with possibilities. (Stephen Bylansen).

Prostitute. A kind of woman beggar. (D. W. Barker).

Prude. One who respects herself but, from experience, has no respect of others. (Sir Robert Witt).

Rump. A sort of parliament. (Lucie Milnes).

Sex. The romance of the flower. (N. P. Medway).

Stocking. Once a covering for the leg ; now a provocation to sensuality. (Barbara Fletcher).

Troublesome. (Of the opposite sex), attentive. (R. S. Jaffray).

Virtue. The quality of self-protection. (Sir Robert Witt).

Whoopee. Term applied to Buffalo Bill's contacts with friendly Indians. (J. J. H. Salter).

In awarding the prizes I had no hesitation in deciding that Miss Barbara Fletcher came first. The second prize goes to Lucie Milnes, whose entry contained half-a-dozen brilliant definitions, spoilt by several others almost pointless.

FIRST PRIZE

Breast. One of the cheaper cuts of mutton. Obscene when used in another sense.

Combinations. A useful covering for objectionable statues. First recommended for that purpose at a Council meeting in Birmingham.

Flowers. The reproductive organs of plants. Used uncovered as ornaments by the ignorant.

Mate. A term used by refined people only when playing chess.

Mother : When fully qualified, the noblest of her sex ; when an uncertified practitioner, the reverse.

Minuet : A dance which the B.B.C. musicians are laudably endeavouring to revive. Perhaps the safest form of this risky pastime.

Monkey House. The part of the Zoo which neither a woman nor a true gentleman will visit.

Murder. Next to incontinence the worst of crimes.

Soldier. The most distasteful feature of the servant problem.

Wife. A woman who submits to indignity.

Barbara Fletcher

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

B	▨	L	O	R	D	S	H	I	P	S	▨	A
U	▨	E	▨	▨	▨	H	▨	▨	▨	E	▨	D
T	R	A	M	P	▨	E	▨	T	A	N	G	O
T	▨	S	▨	O	▨	L	▨	I	▨	T	▨	N
O	▨	▨	F	I	L	L	I	P	S	▨	▨	I
N	▨	L	▨	N	▨	▨	▨	A	▨	H	▨	S
▨	S	E	N	T	I	M	E	N	T	A	L	▨
P	▨	T	▨	L	▨	▨	▨	D	▨	L	▨	R
A	▨	▨	T	E	M	P	E	R	A	▨	▨	E
W	▨	I	▨	S	▨	A	▨	U	▨	C	▨	D
N	O	N	E	S	▨	R	▨	N	I	A	G	A
E	▨	E	▨	▨	▨	I	▨	▨	▨	N	▨	C
E	▨	L	A	T	E	S	C	E	N	T	▨	T

Last week's winner is:

Ed. Graham Guest, 5, Newbattle Terrace,
Edinburgh.

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By URBANUS

INVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC POLICY—CAPITAL GOODS SHARES VERSUS CONSUMPTION GOODS—INITIAL SERVICES

NEWS that we have acted before the Germans in invading a country for its own " protection " is so rare that it is small wonder Syria put some life into the Stock Exchange. How long it will last is another matter. The political debate in the House of Commons had no market effect, but the debates to come on rationing, concentration and the Prices of Goods Act are not likely to allay the dissatisfaction with the Government's economic policy. As one Member of Parliament put it in a letter to the *Times* : " The Minister of Labour approves the grant of increased purchasing power to the workers. The President of the Board of Trade restricts the goods they may buy, the Minister of Supply pays inflated prices for his purchases, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer is granting subventions to keep the cost of living down." Now work out an investment policy from these premises !

* * *

One reader does not agree with my view that the capital goods shares, yielding 10 per cent. upwards, are cheap in comparison with the consumer goods shares, yielding from 6¾ per cent. downwards. His argument is twofold : (1) That the high yields on " war babies " are really illusory in view of the current high rate of taxation, and (2) that the tax-free capital appreciation which will be obtained upon Marks and Spencer (and the retailers') shares when peace breaks out will more than outweigh the difference in the yield in the intervening period. And this, he claims, holds good even if peace does not " break out " for two or three years. I would contest this argument at both points. The current high rate of taxation is a common denominator and cannot make a *comparison* of yields illusory. I agree, one would not invest to-day for the pleasure of obtaining high yields because, after income-tax and sur-tax have been deducted, the pleasure may well seem illusory. And I am altogether for tax-free capital appreciation. But it is relevant to this question of yields to remark that in most cases the capital goods shares have had their dividends reduced and adjusted to meet the war situation, whereas Woolworths and Marks and Spencer have not yet adjusted their dividends to meet the present restriction of the home trade and the rationing of cloth and clothing. This brings me to the second and vital point—that the " tax-free capital appreciation which will be obtained upon retailers' shares when peace breaks out " will not be from the base of the level of prices ruling when I originally put forward my argument. I anticipate that Woolworths and Marks and Spencer dividends will be cut, and that the shares will fall in market value, and that the appreciation which will follow the declaration of peace may not quite restore them to the prices ruling to-day.

* * *

And why should the capital goods shares, yielding to-day 10 per cent. or more, fall in market value when peace breaks out ? This war is destroying the existing stock of civilian goods of all kinds, and, when it is over, we shall be as short of capital goods like industrial plant and equipment, road and railway equipment, etc., and of durable consumers' goods like houses, household appliances, motor-cars, etc., as we are to-day of clothing and cloth and other consumable things. My critic rather suggests, by the use of the term " war babies," that the steel shares will collapse on the outbreak of peace, but I can see years of peacetime prosperity ahead for United Steel, Stewarts and Lloyds, Hadfield's and others. Indeed, the multiple shops will have to wait some time after the peace—till the manufacturers have filled their shelves—before they can enjoy good trading. The peacetime Government controls and taxation, however irksome they will be, will be common to both classes of industry. Safety of capital, not yield, is the first consideration for investors to-day. I would not begin by buying shares which may suffer considerable depreciation before the war is over.

* * *

Market placings are now so few and far between that it was something of an event for two Stock Exchange broker firms to place 500,000 5*s*. ordinary shares of Initial Services at 10*s*. free of stamp, the present market price being around 12*s*. Initial Services is a go-ahead company which was started in 1928 to supply towels and soap to workers in offices and factories and to collect the towels weekly for washing. It was a humble service, but cleanliness is part of morale, and few workers in City offices have not blessed this enterprising company. In recent years the company added to its services by serving tea to the staff in business houses and by hiring out and maintaining carrier cycles and motor vans. It now operates in over 400 towns in Great Britain. For 1939-40 it earned 26.3 per cent. and paid 25 per cent. in dividends. For the current year to June its dividends are being reduced, and it is expected to pay 16⅔ per cent., so that at the present market price the shares would yield a little under 7 per cent. It is one of the few consumption goods shares which might be purchased without the prospect of undue capital depreciation.

SPECIALISED TRAINING

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